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The road commission not taken

County officials opt not to take control of once-troubled agency

By JOHN MATUSZAK
HP Staff Writer

ST. JOSEPH — They came to a fork in the road, and the Berrien County Board of Commissioners on Thursday chose not to take over the agency responsible for the area's byways.

"I believe that the road commission, under the new (Director Louis Csokasy) is running a lot smoother," County Commissioner Neal Nitz said before the board voted 10-1 not to take over the once-troubled agency. "We're hearing a lot less concerns from the public."

Csokasy, hired in October 2013, was pleased by the vote of confidence. "It's nice to know that the county board supports the road commission and recognizes the efforts of the people who work here."

The decision was the culmination of more than two years of controversy swirling around the semi-autonomous road commission. In 2012 road commission employees raised allegations about management misconduct and questions about fund use.

The road commission hired an independent investigator to look into the allegations. Based on the investigation's report, the county board fired two of the five road commissioners while a third resigned.

The 2012 shakeup saw three managers leave their positions with the road commission.

Michigan laws allows counties to take the reins of road commissions, and some have done so. That law expires Jan. 1.

The Berrien County board first considered a takeover in October of last year, and then held off four months to give Csokasy and the new road commissioners a chance to right the ship.

A vote on the takeover was postponed from October of this year to December when county commissioners said they were seeing signs of progress.

One of the major efforts has been communication with the public and responding to complaints, Csokasy said when contacted at his office. The office is installing a "Q-alert" system that will allow customers to request service from their cell phones.

The commission has refocused itself on its main task, Csokasy said.

"We have a saying that 'Our only concern is what happens between the white lines,'" the director said. "In this business you get better or disappear."

That has included getting ready for winter, with

See **COMMISSION**, page A10

Doggone cold

Don Campbell / HP staff

Cathy Schaffer, left, from St. Joseph, and Bev Rittmeyer, from Coloma, walk their cocker spaniels, "Ellie," left and "Irish" Thursday along the Howard Family Recreational Trail in St. Joseph.

Art for Art's sake

Beloved or bemoaned truck may linger

By ANDREW LERSTEN
HP Staff Writer

WATERVLIET — There's still hope for the embattled Arthur the Yard Art Truck in Watervliet Township.

Brian Richardson has the old, inoperable pickup truck in front of his house along Red Arrow Highway and received a ticket from the township earlier this year demanding it be removed.

Officials said the truck violates the township's ordinance banning junk vehicles.

But after an outpouring of public support for the rusty old truck, the Township Board sent the matter to the township Planning Commission for a second opinion, and vowed to have an answer by January.

The planners are now discussing what might constitute "yard art," and how the township would regulate it, as a direct result of the truck controversy, Zoning Administrator Bob Lohr said.

"They're considering if there's anything that can be done," Lohr said. "They're researching ideas."

The planners will again discuss the topic at their next meeting at 2 p.m. Jan. 6, he said. Lohr and Planning Commissioner Joe Stepich are heading up the research.

Some things the planners will need to consider is a general definition of yard art, and whether it would require a special land use permit, Lohr said.

Without a vote, the Township Board this week agreed to keep in place the temporary reprieve for the truck's removal until the planners can complete their study.

"You don't want to rush it," Lohr said. "(Officials) are going to be patient and fair about it."

The Township Board received 32 letters about the truck, overwhelmingly in support of it, officials said earlier.

Contact: alersten@TheHP.com, 932-0357, Twitter @HPLersten

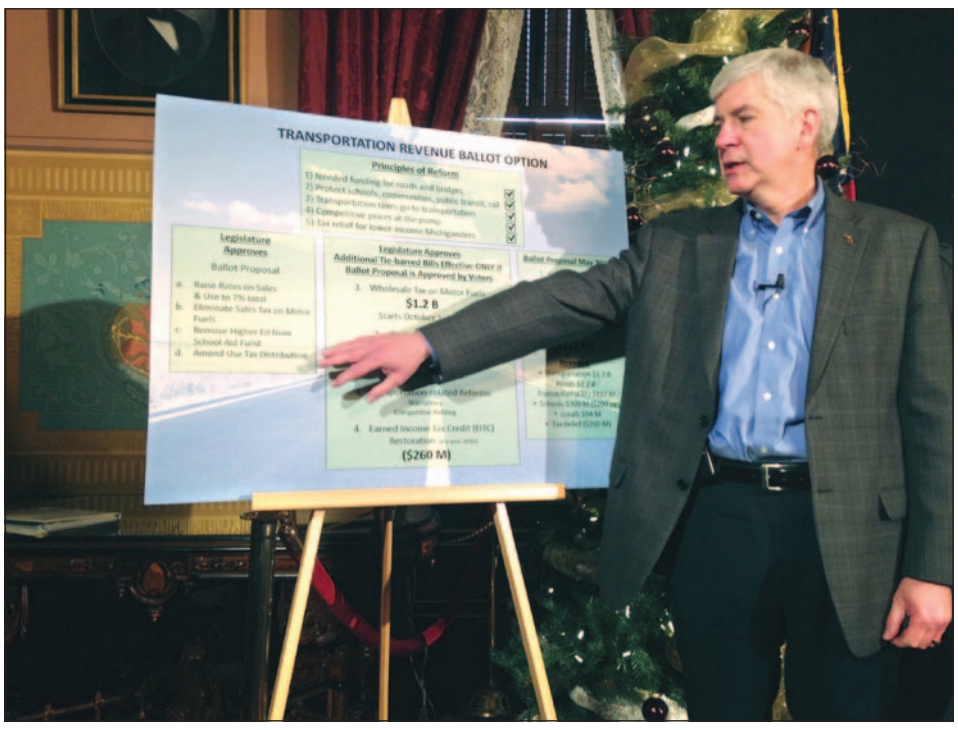
Michigan to vote on 7 percent sales tax for roads

By DAVID EGGERT
Associated Press

LANSING — Michigan voters would be asked to approve a sales tax increase as part of a $1.6 billion deal struck Thursday by Gov. Rick Snyder and legislative leaders, who settled on an all-or-nothing statewide vote to fix deteriorating roads.

The Republican-led Legislature was expected to vote on the plan late in the day and possibly into early Friday, as the two-year session was drawing to a close. A statewide vote would occur in May if two-thirds of the House and Senate OK the proposed constitutional amendment.

It would ask voters to raise the 6 percent state sales and use taxes to 7 percent, drop the sales tax on fuel and ensure that school aid fund revenue goes only to K-12 districts or community colleges – not universities. Transportation funding would rise by $1.3 billion a year, giving a big boost to the $2 billion now collected through fuel taxes and license plate fees. And $11.8 billion in annual school funding would jump by at least $300 million, the equivalent of $200 per student.



David Eggert / AP

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder explains the transportation department's revenue budget ballot option during a news conference in Lansing Thursday. Michigan voters would be asked to approve a 1 percentage point hike in the 6 percent state sales tax as part of an estimated $1.6 billion road and school funding deal announced Thursday by Snyder and legislative leaders. The Republican-led Legislature is expected to vote on the plan later in the day, the last of the two-year session. A statewide vote would occur in May if two-thirds of the House and Senate okay the proposed constitutional amendment.

"We have a solution that really takes into account key concerns in a very bipartisan, bicameral fashion. We listened to everyone," the Republican governor said.

Michigan spends less per driver on roads than any other state. It ranks 33rd in spending per lane mile and 47th per vehicle mile traveled, according to the state Transportation Department.

Yet Michigan also has some of the country's highest taxes at the pump, about 10 cents a gallon above the national average. That's because the sales tax is also applied to fuel, but mostly goes to schools and local governments under the state constitution.

See **ROADS**, page A10

County board OKs FOP contract

By JOHN MATUSZAK
HP Staff Writer

ST. JOSEPH — The Berrien County Board of Commissioners on Thursday approved a new contract with the 185 employees represented by the Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council.

The contract runs from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2017, and provides employees a 1 percent salary increase in each of those years. The current agreement expires Dec. 31.

According to Shelly Jasper, the county's human resource director, the salary range for an entry level clerical employee will increase from $11.84-$15.43 an hour to $11.96-$15.58 an hour in 2015.

The entry level salary for an employee with a bachelor's degree will increase from $33,802-$44,052 this year to $34,140-$44,493 in 2015.

Employees will pay 19 percent of their monthly health insurance premium in 2015, and 20 percent in 2016. They have been paying 18 percent.

The contract allows employees at least 21 days notice of a layoff. The current contract provided 14 days notice.

Contact: jmatuszak@theHP.com, 932-0360, Twitter: @HPMatuszak

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European court rules obesity can be considered a disability

By CAROL J. WILLIAMS
Los Angeles Times (TNS)

Obesity can be considered a disability if it hinders job performance, the European Court of Justice ruled Thursday in a case with broad implications for employers across the 28-nation European Union.

Although no EU law specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of weight, obesity could be considered a physical disability in need of accommodation by the employer if it "hinders the full and effective participation of the person concerned in professional life on an equal basis with other workers," the Luxembourg-based high court ruled.

The case was brought by a Danish child-care worker, Karsten Kaltoft, who weighed more than 350 pounds during his 15 years of employment with the city of Billund. He filed suit against the local government alleging he was discriminated against because of his size, although the child-care agency said his dismissal was necessary because of a drop in the number of children enrolled in its program.

By classifying obesity as a disability in certain conditions, the court whose rulings are binding for all European Union countries raised the prospect of employers being obligated to make available larger desks, wider doorways and closer parking spaces to accommodate those whose weight limits their mobility and comfortable work environment, labor law experts told European media.

"This has opened a can of worms for all employers in this country," Tam Fry, spokesman for Britain's National Obesity Forum, a health care group, told the Daily Mail.

He said it would require furniture and facilities adjustments to accommodate obese workers and could lead to "friction in the workplace between obese people and other workers."

World Health Organizations figures suggest about 20 percent of European men and 23 percent of women are obese, posing a considerable burden on employers to invest in disability accommodations.

The ruling was expected to be challenged by some European Union member states.

Colombia's government rebuffs rebel truce

By LIBARDO CARDONA
Associated Press

Ramon Espinosa / AP

In May 2014, negotiators from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), left, and Colombia's government, right, give a press conference under a sign that reads in Spanish "Peace Talks" in Havana, Cuba. Colombia's government has rebuffed a unilateral truce declared on Wednesday by the country's largest rebel group, saying conditions demanded by the guerrillas' are unacceptable until a peace deal is reached. Sitting at the table, from left, are chief of the western bloc of the FARC Pablo Catatumbo, FARC chief negotiator Ivan Marquez, Norwegian guarantor Dag Nylander, Cuban guarantor Rodolfo Benitez Verson, head of Colombia's government team Humberto de la Calle, government negotiator Sergio Jaramillo, and government negotiator Gen. Jorge Mora.

BOGOTA, Colombia — Colombia's government on Thursday rebuffed a unilateral truce declared by the country's largest rebel group, saying the guerrillas' conditions are unacceptable until a peace deal is reached.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia on Wednesday said it would lay down its weapons for an unlimited period to bolster peace talks that have been held in Cuba for the past two years.

But Latin America's oldest and strongest insurgency also said it would call off the cease-fire if its units were attacked by Colombia's U.S.-backed military, a condition that appears to doom the gesture due to the government's longstanding refusal to enter a bilateral truce out of fear it would give the rebels an opportunity to rearm.

President Juan Manuel Santos said he couldn't accept the rebels' demand the truce be verified by several Latin American nations and by the international Red Cross. Such outside verification would have to wait until a deal to end hostilities is reached, he said in a statement.

Still, Santos said he values the rebels' gesture as a way to begin de-escalating a half-century-old conflict that still claims hundreds of civilian lives every year and is fueled by the smuggling of cocaine and other criminal activity.

It's unclear where the government's response leaves the cease-fire, which is set to take effect midnight Saturday.

Although the rebel army known as the FARC has declared temporary cease-fires before, around Christmas and elections, this is the first time since the 1980s it has offered to indefinitely lay down its weapons nationwide.

The FARC's announcement in Havana came on the same day that the Cuban and U.S. governments announced they would restore diplomatic ties after five decades of U.S embargo, indicating major progress toward ending another Cold War conflict. Analysts saw the timing as a coincidence.

"The FARC proposal responds to a totally different, Colombian, dynamic," said Adam Isacson at the Washington Office on Latin America think tank.

The gesture comes as both sides try to recommit themselves to talks that were almost derailed following the capture last month of an army general, the highest-ranking officer ever held by the FARC.

Santos briefly suspended negotiations, but the crisis was overcome after the FARC freed the general two weeks later.

Also Thursday, the FARC apologized for its role in a 2002 massacre that left at least 79 people dead and many more injured. In the midst of a battle with a paramilitary group, the FARC attacked a church where civilians were taking refuge. A FARC representative asked for forgiveness in Havana before a group of victims of the attack.

Santos responded that such apologies are what he expects from the peace process, and said they will help the country leave behind the pain of the war.

The two sides already have reached agreements on agrarian reform, political participation for the FARC and how to jointly combat illicit drugs in what was long the world's largest cocaine producer.

But some of the thorniest issues remain unresolved, including how the FARC would lay down its arms and whether commanders would face prosecution for atrocities and drug trafficking.

Thousands of Colombians, led by still-powerful former President Alvaro Uribe, marched over the weekend in major cities to reject any amnesty that would allow rebel leaders to escape justice for killings, kidnappings and drug trafficking.

Uribe, whose conservative government launched the military offensive credited with pushing the FARC deeper into the jungles, on Wednesday called the guerrillas' conditioning of its cease-fire on the government's withholding of its own firepower a form of blackmail.

Hope and some fear in Cuba amid thaw with U.S.

By PETER ORSI and ANDREA RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

HAVANA — The restoration of diplomatic ties between Cuba and the United States unleashed expectations Thursday of even more momentous changes on an island that often seems frozen in a past of classic cars and crumbling Art Deco buildings.

On the first full day after the surprise announcement, many Cubans expressed hope that it will mean greater access to things taken for granted elsewhere, and will lift a struggling socialist economy where staples like meat, cooking oil and toilet paper are often hard to come by.

"It's an extraordinary turn of events for Cubans and Cuban-Americans," said Sandro Hernandez, a 42-year-old computer technician who hopes to see more jobs created as a result of restored relations.

That optimism, however, was tempered with anxiety. Some fear a cultural onslaught, or that crime and drugs, both rare in Cuba, will become common along with visitors from the United States. There is also concern that the country will become just another Caribbean destination.

"There are things that shouldn't get lost, that have gone very well here even though Cubans complain," said Nayda Martinez, a 52-year-old chemical engineer in Havana.

"I don't want the system, the country or the regime, whatever you want to call it, to change," Martinez said. "What the people want is to live better."

That mix of good and bad was a common refrain Thursday among Cubans trying to digest the implications of such a seismic shift between the two Cold War rivals after more than half a century of bad blood.

Trade with the U.S. will help the country develop, said 55-year-old homemaker Maria Betancourt, but she worried it would bring another kind of isolation.

"I wouldn't want to lose that uniquely Cuban solidarity, or for this to become a more consumerist or individualist society," she said.

Cuba is a place of contrasts. It matches the most developed nations in education and health indicators such as infant mortality. It has one of the lowest crime rates in the Western Hemisphere and some of the best-preserved habitat in the Caribbean, in part because of the lack of development.

But the majority of islanders still work government jobs that pay just $20 a month on average. Internet access is scarce, slow and expensive. There is almost no media that isn't controlled by the state. The Communist Party is the only sanctioned political party, and that is not open to debate. Complaining about a pothole on your street is OK, but openly protesting the government can still land you in jail.

Cubans have learned to navigate their heavy handed political system and figured out how to survive amid the scarcity, long lines and a chronic housing crunch that forces families to pack three generations or more under one roof. Many are eager for change, but no one yet knows what the diplomatic opening will bring.

"Life here is so tough that if it keeps getting worse, there will be even more problems," said Jose Marcos, a 35-year-old shop employee.

While people cheered Wednesday when they learned that three Cuban agents held in the United States had been sent home as part of a deal that also released American Alan Gross after five years in prison, Havana was quiet on Thursday. People went about their daily routines, with bicycle taxi drivers pedaling the streets looking for fares and fruit vendors calling out to passers-by. There was no immediate word of plans for any official celebration like the welcome home party in 2000 for Elian Gonzalez after a yearlong custody battle in Miami.

LOTTERIES

Thursday drawings

Michigan
Poker Lotto
AD-4C-8C-3D-3S
Midday Daily 3
6-9-3
Midday Daily 4
9-6-2-8
Daily 3
9-8-0
Daily 4
2-2-9-2
Fantasy 5
01-04-15-17-30
Keno
01-03-06-07-11-13-20-21-22-36-38-40-44-53-56-57-59-65-71-75-79-80
Indiana
Quick Draw Midday
07-15-17-18-28-30-31-32-37-43-45-52-58-63-70-71-73-74-75-79
Daily Three-Midday
5-7-6
Daily Four-Midday
0-8-1-9
Illinois
Hit or Miss Midday
01-02-09-10-11-14-15-17-18-19-21-22, GLN : 1
Hit or Miss Morning
02-03-04-05-06-09-11-15-18-19-21-22, GLN : 4
LuckyDay Lotto Midday
11-18-22-23-36
Pick Three-Midday
5-8-1, Fireball: 6
Pick Four-Midday
6-9-9-6, Fireball: 5

Wednesday evening drawings

Michigan
Classic Lotto 47
01-02-11-15-38-44
Poker Lotto
JC-6D-8D-5H-9H
Daily 3
8-3-3
Daily 4
8-7-0-8
Fantasy 5
06-08-34-36-37
Keno
05-13-19-21-23-24-26-28-33-34-38-41-47-51-52-60-64-69-73-77-78-79
Mega Millions
Jackpot: $125 million
Powerball
22-31-38-47-48, Powerball: 15, Power Play: 3
Indiana
Cash 5
11-18-26-36-37
Poker Lotto
QH-JS-5C-6D-2S
Daily Three-Evening
7-6-9
Daily Four-Evening
9-5-3-6
Quick Draw Evening
02-05-07-10-14-20-21-22-28-29-31-35-36-39-41-43-51-58-61-75
Hoosier Lotto
07-09-16-17-24-44
Illinois
Hit or Miss Drive
01-02-03-05-07-08-13-15-16-20-22-23, GLN : 3
Hit or Miss Evening
01-02-04-07-09-11-12-17-18-20-21-23, GLN : 3
Pick Three-Evening
6-2-4, Fireball: 0
Pick Four-Evening
7-3-0-9, Fireball: 7
Lucky Day Lotto
01-04-14-36-40

– The Associated Press

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COLOMA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Coloma, Michigan

Coloma Community Schools will open the application period for non-resident enrollment as a Schools of Choice student for the second semester of the 2014-2015 school year.
Students in Berrien, Van Buren or Lewis Cass counties are eligible to apply.

Coloma is dedicated to providing a top quality education with an emphasis on diversity, creativity and innovation in a safe and caring environment. These are traits we recognize as the key to success in tomorrow's world.

- High School has been recognized by the Michigan Dept. of Education as a Rewards School in 2011-12 and 2012-13.
- Advance Placement courses offered
- Career/Technical courses articulated with colleges/universities that extend college credit upon successful completion of the course
- Robotics Club competing in the FIRST World Championship 2nd year in a row
- ACT prep classes
- Band – Division 1 rating at Festival 9 years in a row
- Junior High offers an After School Study Hall
- All day preschool and kindergarten
- All students in Preschool - 5th grade receive free breakfast and lunches
- All buildings have been newly renovated including technology upgrades

Limited openings are as follows:

Kindergarten	10	Third Grade	5	Sixth Grade	10	Ninth Grade	0
First Grade	15	Fourth Grade	5	Seventh Grade	0	Tenth Grade	15
Second Grade	5	Fifth Grade	0	Eighth Grade	5	Eleventh Grade	15
						Twelfth Grade	0

Applications will be accepted December 29, 2014 – January 9, 2015 and can be picked up at the Administration Office at 302 W. St. Joseph Street, on the school's website at www.ccs.coloma.org or they can be mailed upon request by calling 269-468-2424 x10.

hp LOCAL & STATE

Looking close to home

Berrien Springs board considers superintendent search

By DEBRA HAIGHT
HP Correspondent

BERRIEN SPRINGS — Berrien Springs school board members will look first in the district to find someone to replace retiring Superintendent Jim Bermingham.

Search Committee members Pat DeLong and Jim Jeffrey said Thursday they and fellow board member Paul Toliver had met and decided to start the search by looking first at possible internal candidates.

They said the committee's next steps will be to develop a time line a questionnaire to guide board members as they interview candidates. Board President Peg Bormann said after the meeting she doesn't expect board members to set an application deadline for internal candidates until after their January meeting.

The committee's decision to look internally first with favorable comments from other board members and Bermingham.

"We have kind of a complicated district here," Bormann said. "I talked with Paul (Toliver) before the meeting and he said the committee had discussed it a lot and they felt that we had some good internal candidates."

Bermingham reported on a talk he had with Toliver, who wasn't at the meeting.

"He felt that an internal search would be the best way to go," he said.

Bermingham there's been a turnover of one-third of the superintendents in the state over the last few years. He said it would be difficult and risky for the district to find someone from the outside attuned to all that the district does.

"All of us here buy into the innovation and the off-campus programs we do," he said. "We understand the importance of being a district of choices so we can be a district of choice. It's wise to take a peek and see what we have internally."

There were two big examples of the district's innovations and off-campus programs highlighted at Thursday's meeting. Bermingham reported on a recent staff meeting of the district's off-campus alternative education programs. Then the meeting concluded with a tour of the former Gateway building, where the new Project Lead The Way program will be housed.

The district operates 11 alternative education programs around the state, including ones in Escanaba and Menominee. As Bermingham noted, that means a big expenditure of money on technology as students are provided with computers.

See **SEARCH**, page A4

Seeking answers

Tom Renner photo

Fire shortly before 6 a.m. Thursday destroyed this mobile home along County Road 388 in Geneva Township, South Haven Area Emergency Services officials reported. The family was not home at the time, but a dog died in the fire. The fire is still being investigated. No additional information was immediately available Thursday. The incident remains under investigation.

20 too much for Hartford schools

Districtict officials rap SAC expansion

By ANDREW LERSTEN
HP Staff Writer

HARTFORD — Hartford schools has fought the expansion of the Southwestern Athletic Conference from 12 districts to 20 from the start.

But the district was outvoted every step of the way, Superintendent Andy Hubbard said. Now, as the plan moves ahead, Hartford officials are as angry about it as ever.

Athletic Director Dan Kyle updated the school board on the conference expansion and distributed fall sports schedules Thursday night.

Several board members said they opposed the expansion because it will mean much more traveling for district sports teams, and that in turn will cost more and potentially hurt student achievement.

For example, a team may be asked to travel to Constantine on a Tuesday or Wednesday night.

"I don't think it's in the best interests of the students," board Vice President Bill Najacht said.

President Ben Chambers said he is upset there seemed to be no comment or discussion on the expansion with member school districts.

"Now it's a done deal. This is terrible," Chambers said. "We are not happy with it whatsoever."

Kyle added: "I feel a lot like my hands are tied."

Najacht asked Kyle about the feasibility of dropping out of the conference and becoming an independent district.

Kyle said that alternative would force district teams to potentially travel even farther – to places like Battle Creek or far southern Berrien County.

Contact: alersten@TheHP.com, 932-0357, Twitter @HPLersten

Car strikes forklift, driver seriously hurt

By JULIE SWIDWA
HP Staff Writer

SODUS — A woman was seriously injured Thursday when her vehicle hit a forklift, then a parked semi truck.

The Berrien County Sheriff's Department said it happened at about 7:24 a.m. in Sodus Township, and dark conditions might have contributed to the accident.

The sheriff department's news release did not provide the name of the injured woman, or her home town. A police source confirmed that the injured woman was Patsy Hopkins, 48, and that she was in critical condition at an area hospital Thursday afternoon.

Police said the woman was traveling south on Hillandale Road near Oxbow Road when her vehicle struck a fork-lift that was partially in the southbound lanes of Hillandale. A 62-year-old, man whose name police did not release, was driving the forklift, police said, delivering a product to the parked semi-truck, which was facing north on Hillandale, police said.

Sheriff's deputies said the location where the accident happened does not have street lamps, and the forklift was not equipped with lights. Police are continuing their investigation and a report will be submitted to the Berrien County Prosecutor's Office for review, police said.

Contact: jswidwa@thehp.com, 932-0359, Twitter: @HPSwidwa

Not as simple as it seems

BH commissioners debate surplus funds

By LOUISE WREGE
HP Staff Writer

BENTON HARBOR — How much to save and when to save it is the question facing Benton Harbor city commissioners looking at a rare surplus.

The city has $2.3 million left after the 2013-14 fiscal year, which ended June 30. Just because the city has a little money doesn't mean it's time to go on a spending spree, Mayor James Hightower said.

He said this is the first year in more than 10 in which the city hasn't had a deficit. Deficits led to two state-appointed emergency managers from April 2010 until March.

Hightower said he doesn't want the city to slip into debt again and risk having another emergency manager appointed.

He said the state wants the City Commission adopt a fund balance policy, which states how much money is to be set aside in case of a "rainy day."

"In a nut shell, it's like having an emergency savings account, where you put in a percentage of your overall expenditures," he said.

He said a fund balance policy drafted by the city's staff and reviewed by the state would require the city to keep a minimum general fund balance of 16.7 percent of the general fund expenditures, which equals two months of operating costs – between $1 million and $1.6 million.

"Two months is a bare minimum," he said. "Most cities try to do six months."

But city commissioners have avoided even discussing the policy at meetings.

On Nov. 17, city commissioners voted to table the fund balance policy, saying they needed more information and wanted to wait until after the 2013-14 audit presentation in December.

Finance Director Jody Lundquist presented a 34-page PowerPoint presentation on the fund balance policy Dec. 3 during the city's Personnel and Finance Committee meeting. The only commissioner at the meeting was Juanita Henry, but the presentation was emailed to all of the commissioners after the meeting.

Commissioner MaryAlice Adams said even if she had been able to attend the meeting, she still would have had unanswered questions because commissioners didn't receive an emailed copy of the audit until Dec. 12.

Only two city commissioners attended the city's audit presentation Monday – Hightower and Commissioner Sharon Henderson. The audit presentation was at a special time before the City Commission meeting.

At the regular meeting, commissioners voted to take the fund balance resolution off the agenda with no discussion.

Hightower said it is frustrating to not even be able to discuss the policy.

"There's no reason it (the resolution) couldn't have been voted up or voted down or amended," he said.

He said the commissioners have had ample opportunity to get their questions answered.

"This is not a shell game where people are trying to keep them from getting the answers," he said.

Henry said having a fund balance policy is a good thing, but the timing may be wrong.

"They want to start right away with this, and we have some other ideas that we would like to throw together," she said.

She said many of the commissioners feel like they have been cut out of the decision-making process.

"It seems like staff makes the decisions on what's going on, and then they ask us to approve it, no matter what we say," she said. "We were not getting the respect of even having a dialog about it. They said we're going to do this, and we want you to approve it."

Commissioner Marcus Muhammad said he supports setting money aside in case of an emergency. But he said he has questions about the fund balance policy.

He said former Emergency Manager Tony Saunders in his final order talked about the city having an unassigned fund balance.

"The language used in the resolution is 'unrestricted,' so that would have to be discussed," he said. "The language he used in terms of percentage was the minimum of 15 percent while the recommendation is for 16.7 percent."

He said the difference between those two percentages is critical because if they only need to keep 15 percent, the extra money can be used to fix potholes.

Muhammad said language needs to be added to the resolution giving examples of what the money could be used for.

"It's unassigned, however that does not negate the fact that a generic rubric or template could be put together that would signify what types of emergencies could occur," he said. "... We could say these are potential ways the money could be used for. That way, residents are informed, they're enlightened, about their money and how their money in the event of an emergency could be used. We owe that to them."

Even using the 16.7 percent figure is confusing, he said, because staff has said that amount could be between $1 million and $1.6 million.

"Exactly how much money are we talking about," he said. "What's the actual figure? I think those details have to be discussed amongst the elected body."

Muhammad said there's no hurry because Saunders' order gives no deadline. In addition, he said anything passed by the City Commission must be approved by the state-appointed Benton Harbor Receivership Transition Advisory Board, which cancelled its December meeting and won't meet again until Jan. 28.

Animal Control pet bazaar, rabies clinics set

BERRIEN CENTER — Spend the holidays with the animals at the annual Christmas Carols for Canines and Cats at the Berrien County Animal Control Facility, 9204 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Dec. 24.

A Holiday Bazaar will also be that day from 1–3 p.m. and refreshments will be served.

Enjoy taking a dog for a walk, brushing a cat or adopting a pet. The Animal Control Facility is in need of items to take care of the animals there and their wish list includes: cat litter, kitten food, puppy food, cat food (dry and canned), dog food, bleach, Dawn dish soap, liquid laundry detergent, brooms, towels, blankets, scrub brushes, collars, toys, hay and grain.

In addition, money donations are welcome.

The Animal Control Department will host four rabies shot clinics at the following locations and times:

- Watervliet Fire Department, 212 N. Pleasant St. Sunday, Jan. 11, 2015, noon-3 p.m.
- Family Farm and Home, 1391 Cinema Way, Benton Harbor, Saturday, Jan. 24, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Niles City Fire Department, 1400 E. Main St., Saturday, Jan. 31, noon-3 p.m.
- Bertrand Twp. Fire Department, 4770 US 12, Buchanan, Sunday, Feb. 8, noon-3 p.m.
- Eau Claire Fire Department, 6266 W. Main St., Saturday, Feb. 28, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Dog licenses will be available for purchase via check or cash, and owners should bring the renewal forms with them. All dog licenses are $25 for a one-year license and $70 for a three-year license.

Anyone with questions or to register should contact Animal Control at 269-471-7531 or visit the website at www.berriencounty.org. Walk-ins will be welcomed.

Payments for the rabies shots are: $30 parvo/distemper combo; $20 rabies (1 year); $25 bordatella; and $25 rabies (3 year). Payment for the shots must be in cash only.

Cemetery business delayed due to lack of quorum

By LOUISE WREGE
HP Staff Writer

BENTON HARBOR — Benton Harbor will have to pay to move four cemetery vaults because of billing and location mix-ups, officials said.

Michelle Hart, office manager and supervisor of Crystal Springs Cemetery, said a husband and wife bought two plots in 1975. She said the husband was buried in one of the plots in 1981.

In 2010, she said the wife was told she had to pay $900 for the second plot, though it had already been paid for.

Bert Edquist took over management of the city-owned cemetery Oct. 1, 2013. Since this double payment happened before he took over, Hart said the city has to pay to move the vaults.

In the other case, Hart said the cemetery needs $1,200 from the Benton Harbor Cemetery Board so two burial vaults can be moved to their correct locations. She said the two people were buried in the wrong location before Edquist took over management.

The Cemetery Board was unable to take care of business Thursday due to a lack of a quorum, said Chairwoman Margaret Adams, the only one of the five-member board present.

Contact: lwrege@TheHP.com, 932-0361, Twitter: @HPWrege

Miss Hartford today, cardiologist tomorrow

ANCHOR

HALL

NAME

WILLIAMSON

HARTFORD — Abby Anchor is wearing the crown these days as 2015 Miss Hartford, the pageant committee reported.

The daughter of Kathy and Jeff Anchor is a senior at Hartford High School. Abby, 17, gained the crown in Saturday's pageant in the school auditorium.

The first runner-up and Miss Congeniality is Sarah Hall, 17, daughter of Rick and Susan Hall. She is a senior at Hartford High.

The second runner-up is Brittany Marbut, 17. The daughter of Kippie Marbut is also a senior at Hartford High.

Calvin Williamson, son of Michael and Amanda Williamson and Jessica and Ryan Disterheft, gained the Mr. Hartford title.

Miss Hartford is dual-enrolled at Southwestern Michigan College. Her plan is to attend the University of Michigan and become a cardiologist.

Abby played varsity soccer, is in Student Council and is a student custodian at Hartford Middle School. She is active in her church youth group.

Sarah said she wants to beome an environmenal engineer. She is dual-enrolled at SMC. She has done research in Lake Superior and the Bahamas through the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago.

She runs track and cross country and is Student Council executive president.

Brittany plans to study sonography at Lake Michigan College and then Grand Valley State University. She played varsity basketball and has been involved in student government and Future Farmers of America.

Calvin, 17, is a Hartford High senior. Dual-enrolled at SMC, Calvins plans to study business management and international sales at Western Michigan University. He is wrestling team captain and played football for two years.

Calvin's first runner-up and Mr. Nice Guy is Marty Bedwell, son of Deborah and Chad Bedwell. The second-runner up is Matthew Hallgren, son of Beth and Eric Hallgren.

The other Miss Hartford contestants were Jade Heffington, Alisha Haney, Samantha Tuttle, Ara Hall, Abby Anchor and Alexandria Burnett.

IN BRIEF

Santa's helper to be at D&D

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Santa's helper is once again dropping toys off with William Helton Jr. of D&D Trading Post, 1201 Pipestone Road.

Helton said the toys will be handed out from noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 24 to area girls and boys.

He said anyone who would like to donate toys can drop them off at Walgreens, 875 E. Napier Ave., or at Countryside Convenience, 5701 E. Napier.

Bills OK'd to help Detroiters avoid foreclosure

LANSING (AP) — Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan says bills approved overwhelmingly by the Legislature would give 20,000 Detroit homeowners the ability to restructure their property tax debts to avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes.

The legislation would cut interest on back taxes from 18 percent to 6 percent and let homeowners enter into a payment plan for up to five years to pay down their delinquency.

A debt forgiveness component also would be established to ensure a homeowner's tax bill is no more than 25 percent of the house's market value.

The legislation the House passed Thursday heads to Gov. Rick Snyder for his expected signature.

Duggan says he's also happy about passage of an insurance-related bill that would help the city more quickly address fire-damaged buildings in need of demolition.

Snyder: Hamtramck ready to return to self-rule

HAMTRAMCK (AP) — Gov. Rick Snyder says Hamtramck is emerging from its financial crisis and says he's accepting an emergency manager's recommendation that elected officials regain their authority in the Detroit enclave of 22,000.

Snyder announced Thursday that the financial emergency in Hamtramck "has been sufficiently addressed" to "begin the process of transitioning back to local control."

The governor named Cathy Square as emergency in June 2013 because of persistent municipal budget deficits.

Snyder says he has appointed a Receivership Transition Advisory Board to smooth the return to home rule.

The governor says that Square's accomplishments include securing a $2.3 million, 10-year loan for Hamtramck to repay a debt to the retirement system. He says she also negotiated salary concessions and sold surplus city property.

Bills OK'd to require DNA from felony suspects

LANSING (AP) — The Michigan Legislature has approved bills to expand the collection of DNA samples to include people arrested on suspicion of any felony charge.

Michigan already requires DNA swabs from convicted offenders and those arrested on suspicion of murder, rape and other violent felonies. The bills passed 92-7 by the House Thursday night go to Gov. Rick Snyder for his signature.

A divided U.S. Supreme Court last year cleared the way for police to take a DNA swab from anyone arrested for a serious crime.

The nonpartisan Senate Fiscal Agency estimates that authorities collect roughly 3,000 DNA samples from felony suspects yearly in Michigan. That number could quadruple under the bills Snyder is expected to sign.

SEARCH

From page A3

He and technology director Brandon Waggoner reported that the district now has more than 3,000 computers for on-campus and off-campus students, more than double the number in 2010.

The district began offering Project Lead The Way classes this fall, and high school students will move into the remodeled Gateway building on the edge of the district campus in late January. Project Lead The Way emphasizes science, technology, engineering and math curriculum, and Berrien Springs is the first Berrien County district to offer it.

The Detroit News / David Coates / AP

Bob Bashara, left, and his defense attorney Mike McCarthy enter the courtroom for the reading his verdict at the Frank Murphy Hall of Justice in Detroit on Thursday. Bashara was found guilty on all five counts for hiring handyman Joseph Gentz to kill his wife Jane Bashara. The trial revealed his secret life: a former Rotary Club president who used cocaine and hosted men and women at a sex dungeon under a bar.

Bondage 'master' convicted in plot to kill wife

By COREY WILLIAMS
Associated Press

DETROIT — A Detroit-area man was convicted Thursday of murder in a plot to kill his wife so he could devote himself to a life of bondage and domination in an upper-class suburb with women who called him "Master Bob."

The salacious trial of Bob Bashara revealed his secret life in Grosse Pointe Park: a former Rotary Club president who used cocaine and hosted men and women at a sex dungeon under a bar called the Hard Luck Lounge.

Jane Bashara was strangled by a handyman in the couple's garage in 2012 before her body was discovered in her Mercedes-Benz in a Detroit alley.

"The system worked. We finally have closure for the death of Jane Bashara," Grosse Pointe Park Police Chief David Hiller said after jurors convicted the 57-year-old of first-degree murder and four other charges. "On behalf of Jane's family and the residents of Grosse Pointe Park, we are finally able to put this to rest."

Bob Bashara showed no visible emotions as he stood while the jury foreman read the verdict. One of his lawyers, Michael McCarthy, later said, "He's in shock, very disappointed in the verdict."

Bashara is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 15. First-degree murder carries a mandatory penalty of life in prison without possibility of parole.

Judge Vonda Evans showered praise on the jurors, saying, "I am at a loss for words to say how much we appreciate how much you've done."

Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy said she hoped that the verdict "gives the family of Jane Bashara some respite."

In closing arguments, assistant prosecutor Rob Moran asked jurors, "What man would make his own elderly mother hide a gun for him? What kind of man has two women come to the marital bed and have sex with them while his wife is out of town?

"Is that what a man does who's in love with his wife? No. It's the ultimate act of betrayal," he said.

Jane Bashara was a marketing executive with a long record of service to her church and community. Nearly three years after her murder, there still are lawn signs that say, "Justice For Jane."

Handyman Joe Gentz pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in 2012 and said Bob Bashara coerced him into committing the crime. But as Bashara's trial was set to begin in October, Gentz said he wouldn't testify.

Bashara didn't testify either, but repeatedly professed his innocence in the weeks after his wife's death, even attending a candlelight vigil.

Defense attorneys urged the jury to keep their focus on Gentz, not Bob Bashara. They said Bashara could have continued his affairs and lifestyle without getting rid of his wife.

"She is the breadwinner," Michael McCarthy said in his final remarks. "Why would he want her dead? ... There is reasonable doubt in this trial."

Bashara is already in prison for trying to have Gentz killed in jail in 2012.

Jury deliberations were temporarily interrupted earlier this week when Bashara became too ill to appear in court. As he entered the courtroom Thursday to hear the verdict, the judge asked how he was feeling.

"I'm OK ... fair," Bashara responded.

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Cuomo gets kudos, scorn for New York fracking ban

By MICHAEL VIRTANEN
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is getting heaped with praise by environmentalists and scorn by business interests for a planned state ban on hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, even as he insists the decision wasn't his.

Residents statewide remain almost evenly split on the issue, and the divisions are clear, pollsters said Thursday. The decision announced Wednesday followed Cuomo's re-election last month, which the Democrat won easily as expected.

Quinnipiac University Poll's Mickey Carroll said the political impact is likely to be limited and the decision was predictable.

"One area where it's going to hurt old Andrew is in the Southern Tier. They wanted the money," Carroll said. "Andrew Cuomo, for all the baloney that's written about him, is a liberal Democrat."

Marist Poll's Lee Miringoff said the decision plays well toward a national Democratic constituency, if that was part of any calculation.

"Whether Cuomo is keeping an eye to that or not, it's anybody's guess," Miringoff said. "But certainly if you ever are considering taking the show on the road, you want to be on the side of fracking that he's on for Democrats."

Cuomo has said for two years he'd await his health department's analysis and let science determine the outcome.

Following his pledge again Wednesday to defer to experts on "this highly technical question," his health and conservation commissioners described analyses that identified contamination threats to water, soil and air, the absence of reliable health studies or proof that drillers can protect the public, as well as diminishing economic prospects.

"The time to do it is when gas prices are plummeting," Miringoff noted. "In the short term, this cushions the blow."

Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens said he'll issue the ban early next year. He said 63 percent of the state's 12 million acres with these possible gas deposits would already be off-limits because of protections for the New York City and Syracuse watersheds, other drinking water sources and certain other areas, while court rulings have recognized towns' authority to individually ban hydrofracking through zoning, further limiting financial prospects.

Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker said 4,500 staff hours were spent reviewing health studies about the drilling method of extracting oil and gas from deep underground by pumping huge amounts of water, sand and chemicals at high pressures to break up rock formations. It's being done in many other states, including neighboring Pennsylvania.

Zucker said his counterparts in several other states told him they were not consulted before their high-volume hydraulic fracturing began. He said he wouldn't want his family to live near it, and suggested it could be like secondhand smoke, which studies eventually identified as harmful.

Cuomo was asked about the decision again on Thursday.

"If the state health commissioner doesn't want his kids living there, I don't want my kids living there and I don't want any New Yorker's kids living there," he said. "I am not going to put health at risk for jobs. I'm not going to make that choice."

Boston Marathon bombing victim Marc Fucarile arrives at federal court in Boston Thursday where bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev is scheduled for a final hearing before his trial begins in January. Tsarnaev is charged with carrying out the April 2013 attack that killed three people and injured more than 260. He could face the death penalty if convicted.
Steven Senne / AP

Tsarnaev in court for 1st time since 2013

By DENISE LAVOIE
AP Legal Affairs Writer

BOSTON — Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev returned to court Thursday for the first time since he was arraigned in July 2013, and he received a shout of encouragement from the mother-in-law of a man who was shot and killed while being questioned by law enforcement after the bombings.

Security was tight at the federal courthouse in Boston for Tsarnaev's final pretrial conference. Tensions ran high, and one bombing victim had a testy exchange with protesters outside.

During the brief court hearing, U.S. District Court George O'Toole Jr. made no rulings, saying he would rule in writing on pending motions, including the defense's latest push to move the trial out of Boston.

David Bruck, one of Tsarnaev's lawyers, told the judge that the defense plans to file a motion to delay the trial, which is now scheduled to begin on Jan. 5 with jury selection. Bruck did not say how long of a delay the defense will seek.

TSARNAEV

At one point, the mother-in-law of Ibragim Todashev called out to Tsarnaev in Russian in the courtroom. Elena Teyer said she told him: "We pray for you. Be strong, my son. We know you are innocent."

Later, in English, she yelled to the law enforcement officers escorting her out of the room: "Stop killing innocent people. Stop killing innocent boys."

Tsarnaev never flinched or acknowledged the shouts.

Three people were killed and more than 260 were injured when two bombs exploded near the finish line of the April 2013 marathon. Tsarnaev, who has pleaded not guilty to 30 federal charges, faces the possibility of the death penalty if he is convicted.

Tsarnaev, 21, wore a black sweater and gray trousers and had a scruffy beard and a curly hairstyle similar to the one seen in earlier photos. He smiled to his attorneys and one patted him on the arm.

The courtroom was packed with FBI agents, police who worked on the case and more than a dozen survivors and family members.

Outside the courthouse, a man who lost his right leg in the bombings had a testy exchange with a small group of protesters holding signs supporting Tsarnaev and questioning whether authorities have proof that he is responsible for the bombings.

Marc Fucarile held up his prosthetic leg and moved it back and forth toward the demonstrators, saying: "That's proof right there."

One of the demonstrators said to Fucarile: "You should care that they get the right guy."

Fucarile replied: "Get a life, lady. Go to work."

At his last court appearance 17 months ago, Tsarnaev still bore signs of the bloody standoff with police that led to his capture and the death of his older brother, Tamerlan. His left arm was in a cast, his face was swollen and he appeared to have a jaw injury. In court Thursday, he had no visible injuries.

Tsarnaev's trial is expected to last several months, and seating a jury alone could take several weeks to a month.

Judge O'Toole questioned Tsarnaev about whether he had waived his right to appear at previous hearings. Tsarnaev answered in a clear voice: "Yes, sir."

Asked by the judge if he believes his lawyers had acted in his best interests, he said: "Very much."

Earlier this month, Tsarnaev's lawyers argued anew that "emotionally charged" media coverage and the widespread impact of the attacks have made it impossible for him to get a fair trial in Massachusetts.

O'Toole had rejected Tsarnaev's first request in September to move the trial, ruling that defense lawyers had failed to show that extensive pretrial media coverage of the bombings had prejudiced the jury pool to the point that an impartial jury could not be chosen in Boston.

Tsarnaev's lawyers previously said the trial should be moved to Washington, D.C.

O'Toole also rejected a defense request that prosecutors turn over evidence about his older brother's possible participation in a 2011 triple killing in suburban Waltham.

In May 2013, the FBI and Massachusetts State Police were questioning Todashev about that killing when an FBI agent shot and killed the 27-year-old mixed martial arts fighter inside his Orlando, Florida, home.

Officials initially said Todashev had lunged at a state trooper with a knife but later said it was a pole. Todashev's family has disputed that account.

Prosecutors have said Todashev told authorities Tamerlan Tsarnaev participated in the Waltham triple slaying in which the victims' bodies were found with their throats slit and their bodies sprinkled with marijuana.

Judge appoints board to sort out polygamous homes

By BRADY MCCOMBS
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A Utah judge has appointed a board of trustees to sort out the redistribution of more than 700 homes in a polygamous community on the Utah-Arizona border where Warren Jeffs' sect is based.

State Judge Denise Lindberg's order Wednesday gives the panel limited power, though.

The five-person board still must get final approval from the court in deciding who should get which homes. Many houses are expected to have multiple claims from people who have at one point lived in or worked on them.

The board's creation is another vital step toward the state's long-held goal of returning the homes and a scattering of property – estimated to be worth more than $100 million – to community members.

The homes have been in state control since 2005 due to allegations of mismanagement by Jeffs and other sect leaders. Many people remain followers of Jeffs, but a growing number in the community have left or been kicked out.

Recently, two dozen families were given deeds to their homes – a first in the community. Since the fundamentalist Mormon sect created the trust in 1942, church leaders held the deeds while others lived in the homes.

Meanwhile, others are being evicted for refusing to pay $100-a-month occupancy fees for years, depriving the trust of more than $4 million.

Lindberg also decided to keep the same person to oversee the trust despite the man's recent no-contest plea to prostitution charges. Accountant Bruce Wisan was appointed to manage the trust after the state took it over nearly a decade ago. Utah and Arizona attorneys general asked for him to be replaced by former Utah Lt. Governor Val Oveson.

Lindberg said Wisan's personal issues have not affected his work with the trust. She said his knowledge of the issues outweighs any benefits from handing over the reins to Oveson.

Three of the board members Lindberg picked have already served as advisers to Wisan and the trust: Deloy Bateman, Margaret Cooke and Don Timpson. The other two – Greg Barlow and Arnold Richter – are new.

Lindberg said she plans to name four more people to the panel at some point to create a nine-person board to represent more community interests. Terms will be capped at six years.

None of the board members are current followers of Jeffs' sect, known as The Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, or FLDS. That's because their jailed leader has made it clear they are not to participate. Jeffs is in a Texas prison, where he is a serving a life sentence for sexually assaulting underage girls he considered brides.

The Utah attorney general's office said it's pleased with Lindberg's decision to appoint the board.

"We feel it will give those most affected the strongest representation in making these difficult decisions," spokeswoman Missy Larsen said in a statement.

The FLDS is a radical offshoot of mainstream Mormonism whose members believe polygamy brings exaltation in heaven. Polygamy is a legacy of the early teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but the mainstream church and its 15 million members worldwide abandoned the practice in 1890 and strictly prohibit it.

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Columbia Pictures photo

Rose Byrne, left, and Quvenzhané Wallis in a scene from "Annie."

'Annie' cast can't quite pull off elaborate musical

By NEAL JUSTIN
Star Tribune (Minneapolis) (TNS)

'Annie'

★ ½

Starring: Quvenzhané Wallis, Jamie Foxx, Rose Byrne, Cameron Diaz, Bobby Cannavale

Directed by: Will Gluck

Written by: Will Gluck and Aline Brosh McKenna, based on the stage musical book by Thomas Meehan and the comic strip "Little Orphan Annie" by Harold Gray

Running time: 118 minutes

Rated: PG
(for some mild language and rude humor)

In the opening scene of "Annie," the camera zeroes in on a little girl in red-headed curls, enthusiastically reciting a report to her classmates on the death of President William Henry Harrison, which she punctuates with a totally inappropriate tap dance.

Her fellow students moan. She's followed by another Annie, a street savvy scrapper who wins over the room with a desktop-banging chant on, of all things, FDR's New Deal.

New Deal indeed.

It's an early sign that this "Annie," whose producers include Will Smith and Jay Z, is determined to give the 37-year-old musical a few noogies.

There are references to Howard Stern, George Clooney, Batman and Katy Perry. Sandy the dog is named after the infamous hurricane. Annie rockets to fame through Twitter and selfies. Evil foster mom Agatha Hannigan (Cameron Diaz) tries to drink away her bitterness after being booted from C&C Music Factory just before an appearance on "The Arsenio Hall Show." The Daddy Warbucks character, who goes by the name Will Stacks this time around and is played by Jamie Foxx, makes his millions selling cheap cell phones and is running for mayor of New York City.

But in director Will Gluck's effort to be hip, he forgot to hire a cast who can actually sing and dance.

There's no denying that as Annie, "Beasts of the Southern Wild" breakout star Quvenzhané Wallis has abundant charm and a heart-melting smile. But Auto-Tune and rapid-fire editing can't mask the fact that she's not a strong singer or dancer.

The rest of the cast doesn't fare much better. Foxx – who can sing – is saddled with some new songs that should never, ever be released on a soundtrack. Diaz slaughters her solos like Mario Batali in a butcher shop.

It's an amusing novelty to see movie stars take a stab at a family-friendly musical, but it takes more than a recognizable face to pull off elaborate numbers. Only Bobby Cannavale emerges unscathed as Stacks' ruthless campaign manager, making the most out of his comedic bits and tunes. It's no coincidence that Cannavale has the most stage experience, with two Tony nominations.

That said, "Annie" is never excruciating. Gluck pulls off an energetic "It's the Hard Knock Life" that tops the underwhelming staging in John Huston's 1982 version of "Annie." Stephanie Kurtzuba mines laughs from her all-too-brief role as a family services representative, flipping and prancing her way through a penthouse apartment in a delightful rendition of "I Think I'm Gonna Like It Here."

But those pumped-up numbers are among the few moments that will amuse youngsters – unless your children delight in watching Foxx spit out a variety of foods.

At the screening I attended, kids came down with a serious case of the fidgets 90 minutes into the nearly two-hour film, having more fun tearing down the aisles than paying attention to the screen.

There's still a good film to be made of "Annie," but it'll take Broadway veterans, not box-office stars, to pull it off.

Clever 'Top Five' is enjoyable despite a few bumps

'Top Five'

★ ★ ★

Starring: Chris Rock, Rosario Dawson, Kevin Hart and Tracy Morgan

Directed by: Chris Rock

Written by: Chris Rock

Running time: 102 minutes

Rated: R
(for sexual content, nudity, crude humor, language and some drug use)

Colin Covert

Raunchy in extremis, often funny and at times touching, "Top Five" is Chris Rock's sincere attempt to craft a film career largely detached from his stand-up clowning.

Sending up his own old calling, he plays Andre, a celebrity comedian who made fame and fortune with a series of "Hammy the Bear" movies, lumbering in a full body bear suit. When he walks the streets of New York, the greeting is never "Hi, Andre"; it's always "Hey, Hammy!"

He hopes to move on by specializing in protest-themed serious drama. After all, he's a lot less silly after four years of sobriety, he's about to marry reality TV star Erica (Gabrielle Union) and he's just released "Uprize!," a movie in which he stars as a leader of a Haitian slave rebellion.

Unfortunately, his new film looks like an absurd parody of "12 Years a Slave," sinking his career while the new Tyler Perry film draws block-long lines. His fiance only kisses him on camera to boost her ratings. He's feeling very thirsty for something stronger than water lately.

Approached by Chelsea (Rosario Dawson), a newspaper journalist preparing a profile piece, he shares memories of his early career while leading her through the demanding routine of his present life. He recalls the pompous comedy producer (Cedric the Entertainer, roaring at maximum speed) who packed his hotel room with a couple of sensual "angels" who proved to be less than cherubic. They visit sharp-tempered relatives and old friends at the Brooklyn housing project where he grew up, with lively bits from Leslie Jones and Tracy Morgan.

There's one bit of potentially good news in Andre's life. Chelsea's questions are so sharp and clever that he begins to fall for her, right as his televised wedding to Erica approaches. It's a situation that is either a life saver or a torpedo.

The film is a jumble, bouncing from scene to scene with sharp cameos from DMX, Kevin Hart, Jerry Seinfeld, Rock's frequent co-star Adam Sandler and others who don't really advance the plot. The only consistent theme is Rock's natural likability, which helps him humanize his character.

As director, writer and star he still works more like an earnest beginner than a pro. Even after a decade in feature films, acting isn't his strong suit. The expressive Dawson and Union outpace him by miles; even J.B. Smoove as his one-note bodyguard is more believable in character than Rock.

Yet as performer and filmmaker he's clever, enjoyable company in almost every passage, with one awkward exception. The gritty laugh sequences featuring Chelsea's white boyfriend come perilously close to extreme stereotypes of gay men. They feel simultaneously funny and unfair. For a moment it's as if Rock set out to make a clever movie that suddenly burped up a tacky Sandler movie outtake.

Ferguson to end 10 years as host of 'Late Late Show'

By FRAZIER MOORE
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK — It's not such a great day, America – not for fans of Craig Ferguson.

FERGUSON

Ferguson, television's kinetic Scottish cutup, on Friday brings to a close his decade-long run as host of CBS' "The Late Late Show."

Airing at 12:35 a.m. tonight, he concludes a grand stretch of silliness and smarts that, while never posing much of a ratings threat to talk-show rivals, struck a chord with a loyal following (and earned him a coveted Peabody Award for his 2009 interview with – of all people – Archbishop Desmond Tutu). Smarts with silliness.

Last April, Ferguson told viewers he was stepping down.

"CBS and I are not getting divorced, we are consciously uncoupling," he said, puckishly echoing the words of estranged Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin.

This was no surprise since, weeks earlier, David Letterman had announced he was retiring from "Late Show," whereupon CBS tapped Stephen Colbert to replace him. Once upon a time, Ferguson had been thought a strong contender for that job.

But "The Late Late Show" began fading in the ratings, particularly with the arrival of Seth Meyers last February as his NBC competition.

Taking Ferguson's place as host of "The Late Late Show" is British actor-writer-comedian James Corden, who debuts March 9.

During the two-month interim, a slate of guest hosts – including Drew Carey, Will Arnett, Wayne Brady, Jim Gaffigan, Billy Gardell and Sean Hayes – will fill in.

NOW PLAYING

New releases

'Annie'
A hard-nosed tycoon running for mayor of New York City takes in a down-on-her-luck orphan in a bid to boost his popularity in this update of the Depression-set stage and screen musical. Stars Jamie Foxx, Quvenzhane Wallis and Rose Byrne. Rated PG for some mild language and rude humor. Running time: 118 minutes.

'The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies'
The hobbit Bilbo Baggins and his dwarf companions battle the dragon Smaug and the forces of the dark lord Sauron. Stars Ian McKellen, Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage and Evangeline Lilly. Also in 3-D and D-BOX. Rated PG-13 for extended sequences of intense fantasy action violence, and frightening images. Running time: 144 minutes.

'Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb'
A museum security guard travels the globe on a quest to save the magic of an ancient artifact that brings history to life. Stars Ben Stiller, Robin Williams and Owen Wilson. Rated PG for mild action, some rude humor and brief language. Running time: 97 minutes.

New this week

'Top Five'
A comic superstar trying to reinvent himself as a serious actor – while also preparing to marry his reality-star fiancee – reluctantly agrees to an interview that forces him to confront his career and past. Stars Chris Rock, Rosario Dawson, Kevin Hart and Tracy Morgan. Rated R for strong sexual content, nudity, crude humor, language throughout and some drug use. Running time: 102 minutes.

Still showing

'Big Hero 6'
In this animated film, a tech prodigy enlists an inflatable robot and his friends to help save the city of San Fransokyo from a supervillain. Features the voices of Scott Adsit, Ryan Potter and Daniel Henney. Rated PG for action and peril, some rude humor, and thematic elements. Running time: 108 minutes.

'Dumb and Dumber To'
Two idiots go on a road trip to locate the daughter one of them had but never knew existed in this sequel to the 1994 film "Dumb and Dumber." Stars Jim Carrey, Jeff Daniels and Laurie Holden. Rated PG-13 for crude and sexual humor, partial nudity, language and some drug references. Running time: 110 minutes.

'Exodus: Gods and Kings'
The defiant leader Moses rises up against the Pharaoh Ramses and leads his people out of plague-stricken Egypt toward freedom. Stars Christian Bale, Joel Edgerton and John Turturro. Rated PG-13 for violence including battle sequences and intense images. Running time: 150 minutes.

'Horrible Bosses 2'
Hoodwinked by a slick investor, three wannabe entrepreneurs try to regain the upper hand by kidnapping and ransoming their adversary's adult son. Stars Jason Bateman, Charlie Day and Jason Sudeikis. Rated R for strong crude sexual content and language throughout. Running time: 104 minutes.

'The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 1'
The reluctant revolutionary Katniss Everdeen fights to save a dear friend and lead a nation against an authoritarian regime in the opening chapter of a two-part finale. Stars Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth and Woody Harrelson. Also in D-BOX. Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of violence and action, some disturbing images and thematic material. Running time: 123 minutes.

'Interstellar'
As mankind's time on Earth comes to an end, a team of astronauts travel through a wormhole in search of a new home for humanity. Stars Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Jessica Chastain and Michael Caine. Rated PG-13 for some intense perilous action and brief strong language. Running time: 169 minutes.

'Penguins of Madagascar'
A quartet of penguins team with an undercover inter-species task force to stop a villainous cephalopod. Features the voices of Tom McGrath, Chris Miller, Chris Knights and Benedict Cumberbatch. Rated PG for mild action and some rude humor. Running time: 92 minutes.

'The Theory of Everything'
Cambridge University student and future physicist Stephen Hawking falls in love with fellow collegian Jane Wilde. At 21, Hawking learns that he has motor neuron disease. Despite this – and with Jane at his side – he begins an ambitious study of time. Stars Eddie Redmayne, Felicity Jones, and Charlie Cox. Rated PG-13 for some thematic elements and suggestive material. Running time: 123 minutes.

– From HP Staff and Wire Reports

The Mini Page®

Betty Debnam, Founding Editor and Editor at Large

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Celebrating in Washington, D.C.

A White House Holiday

photo courtesy White House Historical Association
photo courtesy White House Historical Association
photo courtesy White House
Merry Christmas!
photo courtesy White House Historical Association
CHRISTMAS 1936
A Merry Christmas from The President and Mrs. Roosevelt
photo: Cecil Stoughton, White House Photographs, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston

Where will you and your family sleep on Christmas Eve? How will you spend the holiday?

If you were a kid living in the White House, your family Christmas would probably involve opening presents in the Yellow Oval Room, then sharing a big turkey dinner.

To find out more about White House Christmases through the years, The Mini Page talked with the chief historian at the White House Historical Association.

Christmas is different now

Today, Christmas and other winter holidays are surrounded with special events, and a lot of attention is paid to gift-giving. Stores and advertisers count on the holiday season to make a lot of money each year. We consumers are bombarded with TV and catalog promotions for everything from toys to fruitcake.

But in the early years of the United States, Christmas was a more private, family holiday. People gathered together and perhaps shared a special meal.

Christmas for children

In the 1800s at the White House, Christmas preparations were quite simple. Greens such as holly or fir might have decorated the mantelpieces, along with stockings.

Some presidents had young children, but others sometimes had grandchildren or extended family living in the White House along with the first family.

For example, the first Christmas party at the White House was given in 1800 for President John Adams' granddaughter Suzannah, who also lived there. In 1834, President Andrew Jackson planned a big party for children that included dancing, games, dinner and an indoor "snowball fight" with cotton balls!

In the mid-1800s, President Andrew Johnson held a party for about 500 children in the East Room. President Theodore Roosevelt invited children to a carnival party in 1903 where they danced, played games and received special treats: ice cream shaped like Santa Claus.

Mini Spy

Mini Spy and Rookie Cookie are helping prepare for the White House Christmas. See if you can find: ❑ pig ❑ letter B ❑ needle ❑ cat ❑ doughnut ❑ strawberry ❑ pencil ❑ letter E ❑ butterfly ❑ ruler ❑ star ❑ ladder ❑ two letter A's ❑ number 7 ❑ muffin ❑ dragon ❑ feather ❑ word MINI ❑ man in the moon ❑ ice cream cone

Rookie Cookie's Recipe

Butternut Squash With Maple Butter

You'll need:

- 1 large butternut squash, halved lengthwise
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 2 teaspoons light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

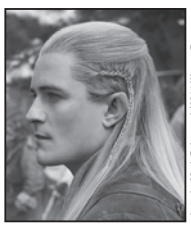
What to do:

1. Scoop out seeds and stringy stuff from squash halves. Using a sharp knife, score the inside of each half several times.
2. Place the halves in a shallow baking dish, cut side up. Add about 1/4 inch water to the bottom of the baking dish to prevent the skins from burning.
3. Season the insides of the squash with salt and pepper.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the syrup, sugar, butter and cinnamon. Brush the mixture inside each squash half.
5. Bake for 1 hour or until squash is very soft and tops are browned. Serves 4.

You will need an adult's help with this recipe.

Adapted from "The Robin Takes 5 Cookbook for Busy Families" with permission from Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com).

Meet Orlando Bloom



Orlando Bloom plays Legolas in the movie "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies." He is famous for playing that character in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and in previous "Hobbit" movies.

He has acted in several TV shows and films, including "The Three Musketeers" and the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies.

Orlando, 37, was born in Canterbury, Kent, England. He has dyslexia, which makes it harder to read. He began acting in school and in plays at his community theater. When he was 16, he began studying acting at a school in London.

Orlando speaks French and English. He supports charitable causes such as UNICEF, which helps children around the world.

from The Mini Page © 2014 Universal Uclick

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Billy Horschel

Gus Goodsport's Supersport

Height: 6-0
Age: 28
Hometown: Grant, Florida

Golf can be a frustrating game as golfers contend with strong winds, near-misses and bad bounces. The tough breaks can add up, and in a sport where there is only one winner, losing can wear down a player. But a champion must always be ready for an opportunity. Billy Horschel was ready for his.

After several unsuccessful seasons as a professional golfer, something clicked for Billy during the 2013 season when he qualified for the PGA Tour for the third time. In his 61st tournament appearance, Billy got his first tour victory. Then things began to get interesting.

In 2014, Billy steadily advanced in the world rankings and had 12 top-25 finishes — and still saved his best for last. He won the final two playoff tournaments of the season, including the Tour Championship, to capture the sport's FedEx Cup and secure his spot as one of the top golfers in the world.

People wait outside the White House on New Year's Day, 1927, to greet the president and first lady.

Greeting the people

Many years ago, New Year's Day was a bigger holiday than Christmas in Washington, D.C. Summers were very hot in the city, so the social season was during the winter.

Presidents John Adams through Calvin Coolidge hosted large public receptions on New Year's Day. Congressmen, Supreme Court justices and regular people lined up to greet the president and first lady.

Preparing for the open house involved decorating, preparing food and many other tasks. After standing and accepting visitors all day, the president and first lady were exhausted.

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Precious Ornaments

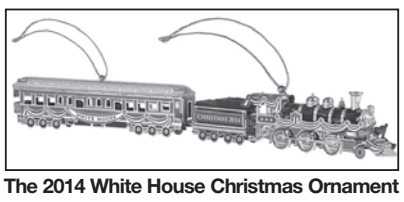
Presidents' ornaments

In 1981, the White House Historical Association started making annual Christmas ornaments. Each one honors one of our presidents. Money earned from sales of the ornaments helps the association preserve historic rooms at the White House and educate the public about the president's home.

This ornament from 2008 honors President Benjamin Harrison.

The first ornament, for President George Washington, was shaped like a weathervane from Mount Vernon, his home in Virginia.

The 1999 ornament was in honor of President Abraham Lincoln.



The 2014 White House Christmas Ornament

The 2014 ornament

For 2014, the White House Christmas ornament is a 1920s-era train. It is in two pieces: a locomotive and President Warren G. Harding's rail car, the Superb.

Harding loved trains and as a child hoped to be a train conductor when he grew up. In June 1923, he set out on a "Voyage of Understanding," crossing the country by train. Along the way he stopped in many cities and towns to meet with Americans.

After sailing to Alaska, where he got to drive a train, Harding and his group returned to San Francisco in early August. While there, President Harding died suddenly. The Superb carried his casket back to Washington, D.C.

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Our National Trees

Michelle Obama, along with her daughters, Malia and Sasha, and their dogs, Sunny and Bo, greet the White House Christmas tree for 2013. The tree has been delivered by horse-drawn cart since 1966.

Pets at Christmas

Most people think of their pets as members of the family. It's that way for presidents, too.

Animals became part of the theme for first lady Laura Bush's Christmas one year, "All Creatures Great and Small." President Richard Nixon and his wife, Pat, dressed their dogs up and had photographs taken of them with their own little Christmas tree.

President and Mrs. Clinton's cat, Socks, poses next to a gingerbread replica of the White House in 1993.

President and Mrs. Kennedy stand next to the Blue Room tree in 1961. The theme for the tree was the "Nutcracker Suite."

Blue Room tree

The first Christmas tree in the Blue Room of the White House was placed there by the children of President William Howard Taft. The president and first lady were away from the White House at Christmas in 1909, and their grown children were hosting extended family for the holiday.

Mrs. Hoover was the first to have an "official" White House tree, and it became a project for future first ladies.

In 1961, Jacqueline Kennedy declared a theme for the public Christmas display for the first time. In 2013, Michelle Obama chose "Gather Around: Stories of the Season" for the theme. Military families made greeting cards depicting their home states to decorate the tree.

The tree must not be more than 19 feet tall. Before its arrival, workers have to remove the chandelier in the Blue Room for the tree to stand in the center!

National community tree

In 1923, President Coolidge promoted the use of electric power by lighting a tree on the Ellipse, a park just south of the White House. Later, the national tree moved to several different locations near the White House.

1923 National Christmas Tree

Today the national tree is not a cut tree; it's a living, permanent tree on the Ellipse. Each year, the president and his family light the tree, and the president makes a speech.

Pageant of Peace

The lighting of the national tree marks the beginning of several weeks of programs, musical events and religious celebrations called the Pageant of Peace.

A special guest

In 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt held the tree ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill arrived in Washington on Dec. 22 for a meeting with the president and was there on Dec. 24 when the lighting ceremony took place. Along with President Roosevelt, Churchill spoke to the crowd from the South **Portico**, or porch.

The Mini Page thanks William Bushong, chief historian of the White House Historical Association, for help with this issue.

Look in your newspaper to find out where and when to watch the lighting of the national Christmas tree.

Next week, The Mini Page is all about the New Year's Day Rose Parade in Pasadena, California.

The Mini Page Staff
Betty Debnam - Founding Editor and Editor at Large Lisa Tarry - Managing Editor Lucy Lien - Associate Editor Wendy Daley - Artist

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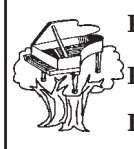
Mighty Funny's Mini Jokes

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

Perry: Why was the piano player asked to join the baseball team?
Pete: Because he had perfect pitch!



Paula: What has lots of keys, a trunk and four legs?
Pierre: A piano up a tree!

Patty: Where did the music student leave his keys?
Penny: On the piano!

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Basset Brown's Try 'n' Find

White House Christmas

L	L	T	C	E	S	U	O	H	E	T	I	H	W	Y
L	C	A	N	H	O	N	O	I	T	I	D	A	R	T
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C	G	E	E	L	I	A	S	T	P	A	R	T	Y	U
R	E	C	G	E	D	T	N	T	R	X	V	O	B	M
U	A	A	V	S	R	R	A	R	M	O	R	O	O	M
H	N	E	M	E	H	T	E	N	O	A	P	E	T	O
C	T	P	Z	N	O	T	G	N	I	H	S	A	W	C

Words that remind us of a White House Christmas are hidden in the block above. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find: CHILDREN, CHRISTMAS, CHURCHILL, COMMUNITY, ELLIPSE, FAMILY, NATIONAL, ORNAMENT, OVAL, PAGEANT, PARTY, PEACE, PET, PORTICO, ROOM, THEME, TRADITION, TREE, WASHINGTON, WHITE HOUSE.

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Ready Resources

The Mini Page provides ideas for websites, books or other resources that will help you learn more about this week's topics.

On the Web:

- bit.ly/1zhgh41
- bit.ly/1xup1UY
- 1.usa.gov/1zhgKmP

At the library:

- "Christmas in the White House" by Albert J. Menendez
- "First Dog's White House Christmas" by J. Patrick Lewis and Beth Zappitello

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Schumer's real message was mostly ignored

E.J. Dionne

Sen. Charles Schumer gave Democrats a talking-to about their obligation to stand up for government's role in helping struggling middle-income Americans – and his message got swallowed up by a few paragraphs on health care.

If you heard anything about his speech late last month at the National Press Club, you know he said Democrats "blew the opportunity the American people gave them" in the 2008 election by putting "all of our focus on the wrong problem – health care reform."

The New York Democrat noted that the Affordable Care Act "was aimed at the 36 million Americans who are not covered" and asserted that "to aim a huge change in mandate at such a small percentage of the electorate made no political sense."

Schumer says he was surprised that nine paragraphs in a 6,600-word speech got all the attention. He shouldn't have been.

Many supporters of the ACA – I'm one – were upset that one of the most important Democrats in Washington seemed to discount one of the party's greatest achievements, especially since the ACA is still under relentless attack. Progressives insisted for decades that leaving so many of our fellow citizens without health insurance was both dysfunctional and immoral. To seize an opportunity to close that gap was the right thing to do.

So what was Schumer up to? I have known him for a long time and he called me this week to explain his intentions. He wanted to call attention to what he, if not the media and his critics, considered the central point: that Democrats could win in 2016 "if and only if we can convince people that government can work and help restore the middle class to prosperity."

On health care, he avowed: "I was glad we did it, and I will be defending it tooth and nail in this Congress." His point was that health care should have been "third and fourth" on his party's priority list, behind additional measures to deal with a sagging economy and to offer concrete benefits to a wide swath of struggling middle- and working-class citizens.

Schumer's list was progressive. It included a bigger and more focused economic stimulus, a minimum-wage increase, the Employee Free Choice Act to ease unionization and strengthen workers' bargaining power, and the Equal Pay Act to end wage disparities between men and women.

Both in our conversation and in his speech, Schumer stressed what liberal economists have said for years: that because only three Senate Republicans even considered voting for the 2009 stimulus and demanded that it be reduced in size, "Democrats were unable to pass as large a stimulus as the economy required." That's true.

All this is about the past. It's the core of Schumer's argument that ought to provoke some soul-searching and action among Democrats – and Republicans, too, if they want to win the White House. Going through "another 10 years of middle-class decline" could make us "a sour, angry country."

Here's the heart of Schumernomics: "As technology continues to advance, automation supplants employment across a number of different industries; low-skilled and even high-skilled wage and salary workers lose their jobs to machines. Globalization, enabled by technology, allows businesses and employers to relocate to low-wage markets halfway around the globe – putting downward pressure on wages. While overall, technology has many good effects – making markets more efficient – it cannot be denied it puts a downward pressure on wages."

The result? "Adjusted for inflation, the median income is actually $3,600 lower than in 2001."

The other part of Schumer's argument is that only government can take the steps needed to expand the bargaining power of the middle class and help it to "adapt to these new forces." Schumer is unabashed in telling Democrats that they shouldn't "run away" from a defense of government. By my count, he used the word "government" 136 times in the speech, probably a record of some kind.

Oh yes, and Americans won't believe in government's ability to solve these problems until they believe in its competence and see that it's been freed from "the grips of special interests." (The favors inserted in last week's budget bill, by the way, won't help on this front.)

It would be useful if supporters of the health care law called a truce on gratuitous attacks against it. But Schumer is right in identifying the biggest problem facing our country. Restoring broadly shared prosperity is not just a good political issue. It's the cause on which every other cause depends.

E.J. Dionne is a columnist for The Washington Post. His email is: ejdionne@washpost.com

The rules of war need updating

Cal Thomas

The attack on a cafe in Sydney, Australia, by a self-described Islamic cleric with a long police record, left two hostages dead, along with the cleric, one Man Haron Monis. He was an Iranian refugee who enjoyed the hospitality and protection of the Australian government.

That incident, which was televised worldwide, was quickly eclipsed by the murder of 145 people at an army-run school in Peshawar, Pakistan. Many of the dead were children. Press reports said Pakistani Taliban fighters burned a teacher alive in front of children and beheaded some of them. A Taliban spokesman said they were exacting revenge for a major operation by Pakistan's Army to clear Taliban strongholds in the North Waziristan tribal area near the Afghan border.

How is the West responding to these and other atrocities? More importantly, how is the Muslim world responding?

In the United States, we have been preoccupied with a one-sided and incomplete report by Democrats on the Senate Intelligence Committee that details some of the enhanced interrogation techniques used in the aftermath of 9-11 to extract information from prisoners confined to Guantanamo prison and other facilities run by the U.S. government. Supporters of those techniques assert they saved lives by thwarting more terrorist attacks; detractors assert the opposite.

In Britain, the Army has issued new guidelines for interrogating suspected terrorists. They include no shouting, no banging of fists on tables and no "insulting words." If Britain had employed those techniques during World War II, Hitler's face might be on the British pound note, instead of the Queen's. When I was in the U.S. Army, drill sergeants frequently yelled at me and they pounded more than tables.

Are we fighting a war, or trying to win "Miss Congeniality"?

Every time we witness these attacks, the apologists here and abroad are quick to issue the familiar excuses. This doesn't represent true Islam, which they say is a religion of peace. These are "lone wolves" (lone rats would be a better designation; wolves at least have some nobility attached to their species). ISIS openly campaigns on the Internet to attract more "lone wolves." In the end, it doesn't matter whether one person or an army of Taliban terrorists kill you. You are still dead.

When the next attack occurs in America – as it surely will – will the Obama administration issue the predictable denunciations and apologies for Islam, or will we do what needs to be done to stop the killers? Civil liberties are worth protecting until they are used by our enemies – along with the constitutional protections we enjoy – to commit murder. If we are attacked again as on 9-11 and many thousands more of us are killed, what then? Will we eventually go back to business as usual, thus ensuring more attacks?

Why aren't the world's estimated 1.1 billion Muslims forming an army of their own to take out those they claim misrepresent their religion? Why must America face most of the financial and human burden? These killers claim to be acting in the name of Islam, so how about members of the "peaceful religion" doing themselves and the world a favor by taking the lead and neutralizing the threat of Islamic radicalism?

Or would that be an "enhanced technique" that might offend the sensibilities of Democrats on the Senate Intelligence Committee? Apparently, those senators have forgotten that the one hijacked plane American heroes forced down in Pennsylvania might have been headed for the Capitol Building.

Cal Thomas is a columnist for Tribune Content Agency. His email is: tcaeditorstribune.com

LETTERS

Bravo to St. Joseph for its fun and festive spirit

Editor,

I would like to take a moment to thank this very generous city.

Visitors from all over Michigan came to St. Joseph to celebrate the holidays on Dec. 5 and Dec. 6, because the unparalleled talent, efforts and passion of so many community members and groups came together to create a milieu of festive events unlike that found anywhere in West Michigan. Starting with the beautiful and unique Light up the Bluff tree-lighting ceremony on Friday (it was so HUGE!), progressing seamlessly into Live Mannequins St. Joseph, and culminating Saturday with the one-of-a-kind Reindog Holiday Parade, it was a wonderful celebration that all of St. Joseph's citizens can take pride in, and are deserving of the multitude of accolades that have been received.

While there are just too many groups and individuals to thank by name in this space, I would like to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to a few of those who played a key part in making the weekend come together. I would be remiss in not thanking my "partners-in-crime" at St. Joseph Today, the group that contracts me to produce Live Mannequins. I couldn't ask for a better partnering organization to work with than Jill Stone and her hardworking staff. Finally, this event couldn't happen without the generous and enthusiastic support of our sponsors, plus all the downtown merchants and individual community members who were a part of Live Mannequins. This is such a happy, supportive community filled with positive energy and genuine people.

Unquestionably, the success of Live Mannequins St. Joseph owes much to the stunning Light up the Bluff ceremony – an event for which I can take absolutely no credit whatsoever – so I offer much kudos to those who so masterfully produced this peerless celebration, as well as Saturday's parade. The way the city stepped forward to take the lead with these festivities, beginning with solid leadership from Mayor Mike Garey, the city commissioners, City Manager Richard Lewis, Communications Director Susan Solon and other city staff too numerous to mention, to the tireless efforts of throngs of volunteers who helped make these events sparkle and shine.

The weekend was truly one of the highlights of my year. This warm community possesses an element of solidarity in partnership unlike anything I have seen, bar none. It's such a lovely place to come to play, work and engage in. Thank you for allowing me to be a small part of your holiday festivities.

To all in this robust community, I say, bravo!

Cynthia Hagedorn
Executive Director
Square Peg Events

Pets make poor Christmas presents

Editor,

We are now in the midst of the holiday season and many are trying to figure out what to get family and friends as gifts. Many times I have heard, "What would be better than a dog or cat (kitten or puppy)?" Wait! Think long and hard on this before you do!

A pet is a long-term commitment of several years. Are the people home enough to take care of the pet? Train? Take for walks, play with and give attention to? Or will the sit in a cage for 10-12 hours a day and be alone?

Plus, is the environment a stable one? Is there domestic violence in the household? Is the household one of tension and stress? Then a pet should not be considered. They will only add to a stressful situation and in many instances, be abused and neglected.

Pets are not cheap. Costs include not just food and toys, but yearly vaccines, check-ups, heartworm prevention, spaying/neutering, etc. What if the pet gets sick or hurt? Normal yearly maintenance fees of food and health checks can add up to a few hundred dollars, but what if there's an emergency? These costs can go from a couple hundred dollars to the thousands. Can the family you're considering this pet for afford this? Are they living check to check? Then a pet may not a good option for them. If they want to love and care for a pet and cannot afford one, shelters more than welcome volunteers to come in and help.

If you think this is the right option, then there are a few other things to consider.

Research and match the lifestyle to the pet. Do your homework. Ask questions. Yorki-poos, Malti-poos, puggles, to name a few, are not hybrids or exotic purebreds as many believe, They are MIXED breeds. Our shelters are full of "hybrids."

Also, check your shelters and rescue groups. If you do want a purebred, you do not have to go to a breeder. About 35 percent of our rescues out there are purebreds. I have had five purebred German shepherds, all great dogs and ALL rescues.

Once you do decide, check your shelters and rescue groups. You will be amazed at the love you will receive from these animals.

Better yet, wait until the holidays are over and life is back to normal. Give it about 1-2 months after Christmas and the shelters/rescue organizations will start to fill up with tossed aside Christmas present pets that people didn't want or realized they couldn't take care of and look.

Animals are a lot of work and huge responsibility. They're not for everyone and that's OK. They depend on us for care and well-being. Their quality of life, good or bad, is on us and we need to take this seriously.

Please support your local rescue groups and shelters. You won't regret it. I don't.

Kathleen Murphy, D.V.M.
St. Joseph

ANOTHER OPINION

Evil act deserves a stronger condemnation

The loss of life at a Pakistani school is unfathomable – at least 141 dead, 132 of them children.

What kind of monsters target children? The same kind who two years ago would target a Pakistani school girl named Malala Yousafzai, now a Nobel Prize laureate.

The Taliban – whose name President Obama somehow chose to omit from his prepared response to the attack – seems fixated on targeting the innocent. This school in the northwestern city of Peshawar was part of a network of schools run by the military. Its students in grades one-10 were the children of military personnel and civilians. The Pakistani government has spent the past six months targeting the Taliban in the North Waziristan tribal area.

The seven gunmen who attacked the school, all now dead, were equipped with explosive vests – determined to kill the maximum number of children one way or another.

"By targeting students and teachers in this heinous attack, terrorists have once again shown their depravity," President Obama said in a one-paragraph statement that praised Pakistan's efforts against these terrorists he refused to name – although the Taliban was quick to claim responsibility.

Perhaps to name the terrorists is also to draw attention to the similar horrific reality in neighboring Afghanistan from which the president has been so eager to extricate U.S. troops. To name the terrorists is to bring back memories of how the Taliban provided safe haven and training camps for al-Qaida, for Osama bin Laden, for those who claimed 3,000 lives on our own shores.

No, we cannot be policeman to the world or attempt to settle age-old grudges halfway around the globe. But neither can we be as inattentive to the consequences of a global retreat as the Obama administration has been. To do so is to invite more mayhem and more killing. Weakness and retreat are not a foreign policy.

– Boston Herald

OBITUARIES

Caroline (Bell) Stanley

Caroline (Bell) Stanley passed away the morning of Oct. 24, 2014, at the age of 97, following a long struggle with dementia and brain damage suffered at a retirement home in Michigan. She was born Aug. 12, 1917, in Stanley, Wis. She leaves behind a sister, Marion Motry of Big Rapids; a son, Wayne (Arlette) Stanley, with whom she lived with for some time in Belgium; four grandchildren: Ame Stanley, Robin Stanley (Ken) Golden, Jessica Stanley and Benjamin Stanley; and two great-grandchildren, Alexis and Megan Golden.

STANLEY

In earlier years, she was a chemist at Auto Specialties during World War II. After her marriage to Austin M. Stanley, Caroline had been the president of the Stevensville, later Lakeshore, PTA for several years and was a librarian at the Benton Harbor Public Library. She was also on the steering committee for Lakeshore High School.

Caroline was always willing to help children, family and friends, as well as strangers, and was the children's librarian at the Benton Harbor library for several years, then leaving to start the Lincoln Township Public library in Stevensville. Of course, the children's hour on Saturday mornings, when she read stories, was the highlight of her work. She later started "The 1937 Group" for the women in her graduation class from Benton Harbor High School. They met monthly for lunch and friendship for many years, later inviting men from their class to join them.

She has been laid to rest in Moorsel, Belgium, near her son's and wife's home.

Elizabeth Schlipp

Elizabeth Schlipp, 84, of Benton Harbor passed away Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014, at Hanson Hospice Center in Stevensville.

SCHLIPP

A celebration of life service will be at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 20, 2014, at Starks & Menchinger Chapel, 2650 Niles Road, St. Joseph, with Pastor Wade Blankenship officiating. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service, starting at 10:30 a.m. Saturday. Burial will follow in North Shore Memory Gardens. Memorials may be made to Hospice at Home. Those wishing to sign Elizabeth's memory book online may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com. Arrangements entrusted to Starks & Menchinger Chapel and Cremation Services.

Elizabeth was born Sept. 14, 1930, in Chicago to Frank and Katherine (Wilhelm) Kuhn. She married Alfred Schlipp, and together they had three children. Elizabeth was proud to be able to stay home and raise her children. Her family was her life. Elizabeth was an amazing cook and baker. She was always known for having candy and was even called "Grandma Candy." Elizabeth was involved in the community, volunteering at Memorial Hospital in St. Joseph. The Christmas holiday was Elizabeth's favorite time of year. She showed her great holiday spirit by dressing up as Mrs. Claus at Meijer for many years. Elizabeth impressed many people with her beautifully wrapped gifts. They were truly a work of art.

Elizabeth is survived by her children: Kathy (Henry) Schilke of Benton Harbor, Alfred (Brenda) Schlipp of Watervliet and Holly (Jack) Hyden of Benton Harbor; four grandchildren: Patty (Dave) Overton, Renee (Mark) Landrum, Danielle (Dave) Stewart and Adam Schlipp; 12 great-grandchildren; and sisters, Eva Krzemen of Lacota and Ann Peterson of Vicksburg, Mich.

She was preceded by her parents; husband, Alfred Schlipp, on June 18, 1994; and brother, John Kuhn.

Hunter Wright

Earl Hunter Wright Jr., beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, went to be with the Lord on Dec. 16, 2014, surrounded by his loving family. He was born in Cambridge, Md., in 1922 and named for his father, but was always known by his middle name, Hunter. Hunter was only 4 when his family moved to Pleasant Ridge, a Detroit suburb, when his father left DuPont to become comptroller of Cadillac Motors in downtown Detroit.

WRIGHT

Hunter graduated from Lincoln High School in Pleasant Ridge, then went to Kalamazoo College, where he was a member of Century Forum Society and Emeritus Alumni Club. He met the love of his life, Betty Zick of St. Joseph, at college, and they were married in 1942 at Zion Evangelical Church in St. Joseph.

Soon after their marriage, Hunter enlisted in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, where he was a cryptographic technician from 1942-1946, encoding and decoding classified messages for the military. He served in the Pacific Theater in New Guinea, Australia and the Philippines, his unit landing by ship in the Philippines three days before D-Day. Hunter was honored to have some of these World War II experiences recorded in the book "Lest We Forget."

Hunter was in the insurance business in St. Joseph for 30 years. He was a devoted member of Zion Evangelical Church of St. Joseph, holding many positions including deacon, and was proud to have been on the building committee of the Veronica Drive church.

Hunter enjoyed sports, especially golf. He loved doing photography as a hobby and was a former member of Twin City Camera Club. He was a hospital volunteer. He rose to the office of worshipful master of Huron Masonic Lodge 361 and more recently had been a member of Lake Shore Masonic Lodge 298. He also had been a member of the Stevensville American Legion and the Elks Club of St. Joseph.

Hunter and Betty were blessed with 72 years of marriage and three children: Cynthia Wright Beles of Sarasota, Fla.; Stephen (Marlene) Wright of Stevensville; and Christine Wright of Stevensville. He is also survived by 10 grandchildren: Bradley (Dawn) Beles, Scott Beles, Jason (Isabel) Beles and Michael Beles, all of Sarasota; Matthew Beles of Stevensville; Tiffiney (Jeremy) Watson of Kalamazoo; Nikole (Neil) Harris of Kalamazoo; Hunter Wright of St. Joseph; C.J. Wright of Stevensville; and Andrew Wright of Stevensville; six great-grandchildren: Stephen Harris and Landon Harris of Kalamazoo; Ryan Beles of Sarasota; Abigail Watson and Cory Watson of Kalamazoo; and Savanna Beles of Las Vegas; and a brother, Jesse B. Wright of California He was preceded in death by a brother, Robert Wright of Easton, Md., and a grandson, Stephen Hunter Wright.

Hunter was a man who lived life honestly, with utmost integrity and consistent with the courage of his convictions. At all times, he intentionally put first the needs of his family, friends and anyone who needed help. He was known as smart, witty, fun, humble, loving and always loved by those he's left behind. Hunter will be dearly missed.

Visitation will be at Zion Evangelical Church, 3001 Veronica Drive, St. Joseph, from 10-11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2014, followed by a celebration of life service at 11 a.m. Burial will follow in Riverview Cemetery in St. Joseph. Memorials may be made to Hospice at Home or Zion Evangelical Church. Those wishing to sign Hunter's memory book online may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com. Arrangements have been entrusted to Starks & Menchinger Chapel and Cremation Services in St. Joseph.

Edward Woods Sr.

Edward Woods Sr., 94, of Benton Harbor passed away at his home Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2014.

WOODS

His celebration service will be at noon Monday, Dec. 22, at Highland Avenue Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2075 Highland Ave., Benton Harbor. Visitation will be from 4-6 p.m. Sunday at Fairplain Chapel of Florin Funeral Service in Benton Harbor and from 11 a.m. until the time of service Monday at the church. Burial will be in Crystal Springs Cemetery in Benton Harbor. Memorial contributions can be made to Highland Avenue Community Service/Mission. Please share memories, messages or photos at www.florin.net.

Edward was born to Alexander and Ella Woods on June 27, 1920, in Marion, Ala. He united in marriage in 1941 with Lillie Ann Lee, and she preceded him in death in 2003. Together they celebrated 62 years of marriage. He retired June 12, 1978, after working at Superior Steel for 38 years. His remaining years were spent growing and selling produce from his farm. He particularly enjoyed selling his produce at the farmers market in association with the Berrien County Health Department.

He is survived by his children: Peggy (Scott) Hunter of Justin, Texas; Eddie (Daniel) Akande of Silver Springs, Md.; Elizabeth Woods of Benton Harbor; and Edward (Edith) Woods Jr. of Berrien Springs; his loving grandchildren: Christopher (Pam) Woods III of Grand Ledge; David Hunter of Seattle; Brian (Gina) Woods of Cordova, Tenn.; Edwin Akande of Huntsville, Ala.; Trishonda Woods of Berrien Springs; Jolayemi (Kabelo) Mochoge of Lindley, South Africa; and Rike Akande of Silver Springs, Md.; three great-grandchildren; nieces; nephews; and many relatives and friends.

He was also preceded in death by his parents; his brothers: Nathaniel Woods Sr., Richard Woods, Alexander Woods Jr. and Emmanuel Woods; and his sisters: Sally McCreaven, Bessie Brogan, Mary Cutts, Ella Lee and Rosa Thomas.

Paul H. Kirchner

Paul Henry Kirchner of Baroda was called home Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014, the morning after his 76th birthday.

KIRCHNER

Services celebrating Paul's life will be at 11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2014, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 2673 W. John Beers Road, Stevensville, with the Rev. Brett Ehlke officiating. Burial will be in Lincoln Township Cemetery in Stevensville. Friends may meet with the family from 10-11 a.m. at the church before the service. Memorial contributions may be given to St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Online condolences accepted at www.PikeFH.com.

Paul was born Dec. 16, 1938, in St. Joseph, the son of the late Paul and Marian (Cox) Kirchner. On Oct. 21, 1961, Paul married Norma Louise Duttarer. He retired from Sears after 38 years of service. Along with hunting, trapping and fishing, Paul was an avid reader, history buff and gardener. Paul was a lifetime member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Stevensville.

Paul is survived by his wife of 53 years, Norma; sons: Paul and Mark of Albuquerque; siblings: Samuel (Veda) Kirchner, Karen Horton and Mona (James) MacKimmie, all of St. Joseph; and Beth Wydner of Stockton, Calif.; and several nieces and nephews.

Paul was also preceded in death by a daughter, Kelly Jean; an infant son, Paul; and a sister, Barbara Blake.

Arrangements entrusted to Pike Funeral Home, Boyd Chapel, 9191 Red Arrow Highway, Bridgman, MI 49106.

Lorraine G. Mabry

Lorraine Geraldine Mabry, 86, of Bridgman passed away Thursday, Dec. 18, 2014, at CrownPointe of Stevensville.

MABRY

Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, 2014, at Pike Funeral Home, Boyd Chapel, 9191 Red Arrow Highway, Bridgman, with the Rev. Terrell Schneider officiating. Friends may meet with the family from 1-2 p.m. at the funeral home before the service. Burial will be in Graceland Cemetery, Bridgman. As an expression of sympathy, memorial contributions may be given to Faith United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 414, Bridgman, MI 49106, or the Women's Auxiliary of American Legion Bridgman Post 331, 4241 Legion St., Bridgman, MI 49106. Online condolences accepted at www.PikeFH.com.

Lorraine was born Dec. 7, 1928, in Bridgman, the daughter of the late Otto and Augusta (Pastrick) Witt. Living in Bridgman her entire life and graduating from Bridgman High School, she married Jack Mabry on May 24, 1947. Lorraine really loved the water and taking long rides down to Weko Beach every evening, and every morning she went to breakfast. She enjoyed taking trips to Florida with her husband.

Throughout Lorraine's life she had great fun playing shuffleboard, bingo and many other games. She was a member of the Women's Auxiliary of the American Legion Bridgman Post 331. Her love for the Lord was visible in her care for helping people.

Survivors include her husband of 67 years, Jack; her sister, Elaine; and many caring and loving nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

Lorraine was also preceded in death by two brothers, Daniel and Robert Witt.

Robert Butler

Robert "Bob" Lloyd Butler, 51, a lifelong resident of South Haven, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014, at the South Haven Health System. Robert, the son of Norman and Margaret (Davis) Rector and Robert Butler, was born Oct. 13, 1963. He proudly served his country in the United States Army after finishing South Haven High School in 1982. He was the proud owner/operator of South Haven Computers for 16 years, serving his community through his store's motto, "Through this door walks the finest people on earth – our customers." Bob impacted all those around him through his loving spirit and his strong faith in Jesus Christ.

Robert was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Larry. He is survived by his children: Brock, Aubree, Julia, Tristan and Elainah Butler, all of South Haven; siblings: Cliff (Rita) Butler of South Haven, Sharon (James) Cross of Indianapolis, Donna (Tom) Powers of South Haven and John (Gale) Rector of Holland, Mich; two grandchildren, Jaden Zambrano and Starlin Trafton; and best friend, Jennifer Getman of South Haven.

Visitation will be from 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, 2014, at Filbrandt Family Funeral Home of South Haven. Funeral services will follow visitation at 4 p.m. at the funeral home. Kindly share your thoughts and memories on the family's online guest book at www.FilbrandtFFH.com.

The family is being helped by the Filbrandt Family Funeral Home of South Haven (637-0333). In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Filbrandt Funeral Home for funeral and family expenses.

Earl Krieger

Earl Krieger, 91, of St. Joseph passed away Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2014, at Appledorn Living Center in Holland, Mich.

KRIEGER

A celebration of life service will be at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2014, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 619 Market St., St. Joseph, with Pastor Thomas Batsky officiating. Burial will follow in Riverview Cemetery in St. Joseph. Friends may visit from 10-11 a.m. Tuesday at the church. Memorials may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church Music Department. Those wishing to share a memory of Earl online may do so at www.starks-menchinger.com.

Earl was born April 19, 1923, in Bainbridge Township to Wallace and Matilda (Warskow) Krieger. Earl graduated from Coloma High School. He served his country in the United States Army Air Corps. from 1943 to 1946. On May 14, 1949, he married Irene Rochau in Stevensville. Earl worked for Sears for 29 years, retiring in 1984. He was a member of the Stevensville American Legion Post 568, VFW 1137 and the Fruit Belt Chorus. Earl was also on the board of the St. Joseph Lincoln Senior Center and involved with the Lest We Forget veterans group and 8th Air Force Memorial Society.

Earl is survived by his wife, Irene Krieger of Holland, Mich.; sons, David (Loretta Sue) Krieger of Holland, Mich., and Douglas (Sue Weilgopolan) Krieger of Colorado Springs; two grandchildren, Todd Krieger and Cailley Krieger; and a sister, Alice Polishuk of St. Joseph. Earl was preceded in death by his parents; a sister, Joyce Locker; and a brother, Armin Krieger.

Death notices

Verda M. Albert, 89, of Niles died Monday, Dec. 15, 2014, at Lakeland Hospital in Niles. Halbritter Funeral Home, Niles, 683-3000.

Beverly J. Binder, 82, of Fennville died Thursday, Dec. 18, 2014, at Spectrum Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids. Chappell Funeral Home, Fennville, 561-4601.

Robert "Bob" Lloyd Butler, 51, of South Haven died Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014, at South Haven Health System. Filbrandt Family Funeral Home, South Haven, 637-0333.

Paul Henry Kirchner, 76, of Baroda died Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014. Pike Funeral Home, Boyd Chapel, Bridgman, 465-3239.

Arnold P. Palanca, 87, of Kalamazoo died Monday, Dec. 15, 2014, in Kalamazoo. Betzler Life Story Funeral Homes, Kalamazoo, 375-2900.

Betty M. Pomeroy-Buysse-Mendenhall, 83, of Niles died Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2014, at Lakeland Hospital in Niles. Halbritter Funeral Home, Niles, 683-3000.

Obama taps CIA No. 2 Haines for White House job

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama is naming the CIA's second-ranking official to a top White House national security post.

Obama says Avril Haines is a "model public servant" who is respected across the government. He says that as deputy national security adviser, she will play a critical role in keeping the country save and promoting American interests around the world.

Haines replaces Tony Blinken, who was confirmed by the Senate this week for the No. 2 job at the State Department. The White House post does not require confirmation.

Haines joined the CIA in 2013 after stints in the White House counsel's office and at the State Department.

MARRIAGE LICENSES

ST. JOSEPH — The following marriage licenses have been issued by Berrien County Clerk Sharon Tyler.

Bradley Arthur Bauer, and Kelly Ruth Frantz, both Niles.

Richard Anthony Cottier and Marlene Renae Elliott, both Berrien Springs.

Travis Merritt Fedore, Dowagiac, and Lori Irene Sennott, Berrien Springs.

Brian Joseph Grice and Misty Jo Chipchase, both Berrien Springs.

James Starling Lester, Milner, Ga., and Reda Lynn White, Buchanan.

Alexander B. Young and Brenda Pearl Patton, both Benton Harbor.

Getting it straight

The Herald-Palladium makes every effort to ensure accuracy in its stories.

If you think there is an error, please contact the editor of the page on which it occurred. If you are unsure of whom to contact, call Assistant Local News Editor Jim Dalgleish at 429-1293.

Do you remember?

25 years ago – 1989

The city of St. Joseph and its public works employees union have reached tentative agreement on a three-year contract, City Manager William Sinclair said at the city commission meeting Monday night. The tentative pact would give the 38 union members a 3 1/2 percent pay increase each year.

Some streets in Benton Harbor are being "taken over by drug pushers," a resident told the city commission Monday night. Fred Pryor, who lives on Pavone Street, said he's afraid to walk out his house for fear of being shot by a pusher and is afraid to leave his family at home alone.

35 years ago – 1979

Construction of a new men's dormitory on Andrews University's campus is slated for completion in the fall of next year. The new five-story dorm will house about 200 students and replace Burman Hall, a wood structure in use for a number of years.

John Varga has been elected president of Berrien Hill County Club for 1980, succeeding Ray Carlson Jr. Other officers are Mathew Borre, vice president; Leo Montgomery, treasurer; and F.A. "Mike" Jones, secretary.

50 years ago – 1964

The purchase of a 160-acre site for the Cass County Community College campus was unanimously approved last night in a meeting of the college's board of trustees.

Today in history

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Friday, Dec. 19, the 353rd day of 2014. There are 12 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 19, 1974, Nelson A. Rockefeller was sworn in as the 41st vice president of the United States in the U.S. Senate chamber by Chief Justice Warren Burger with President Gerald R. Ford looking on (in a first for the Senate, the proceeding was televised live).

On this date:

In 1777, Gen. George Washington led his army of about 11,000 men to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to camp for the winter.

In 1813, British forces captured Fort Niagara during the War of 1812.

In 1843, "A Christmas Carol," by Charles Dickens, was first published in England.

In 1907, 239 workers died in a coal mine explosion in Jacobs Creek, Pennsylvania.

In 1932, the British Broadcasting Corp. began transmitting overseas with its Empire Service to Australia.

In 1946, war broke out in Indochina as troops under Ho Chi Minh launched widespread attacks against the French.

In 1950, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was named commander of the military forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

5-Day Forecast for St. Joseph

Today	Tonight	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Rain/Snow	Scat'd Rain
34º	27º	35º / 29º	37º / 31º	40º / 36º	41º / 34º

Local Outlook

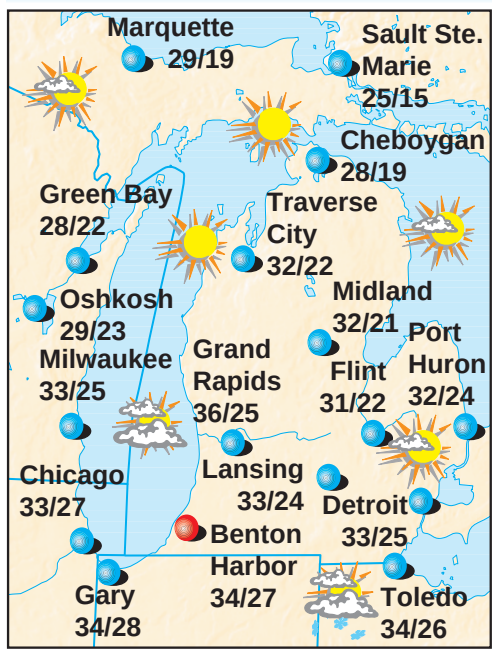
Today we will see mostly cloudy skies with a high temperature of 34º, humidity of 74%. North wind 5 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies tonight with an overnight low of 27º. Light winds. Saturday, skies will be mostly cloudy with a high temperature of 35º.

Sun and Moon

Sunrise . . . . . 8:10 a.m.
Sunset . . . . . 5:16 p.m.
Moonrise. . . . . 5:21 a.m.
Moonset . . . . . 3:41 p.m.

New	First	Full	Last
12/21	12/28	1/4	1/13

Regional Map



Local Almanac

Benton Harbor yesterday

Temperature

High	29º
Low	27º
Normal High	34º
Normal Low	22º
Record High	53º in 1957
Record Low	-2º in 1989

Precipitation

Yesterday	0.00"
Month to date	0.54"
Normal month to date	1.67"
Year to date	25.65"
Normal year to date	36.00"

Air Quality

Yesterday..... 34
Main Offender.....Particles

The higher the number, the greater the need for people with respiratory problems to reduce outside activity.

0-50.....Good
51-100.....Moderate
101-150....Sensitive
151-200..Unhealthy

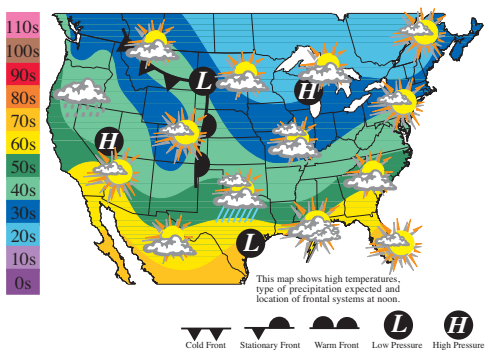
Weather Trivia

Does weather affect appetite?

Answer: Yes. In cold weather, your body requires more calories to heat itself.

National Weather Map

Forecast map for Dec. 19, 2014



Lake Michigan

Today, north winds 10 to 15 kt. Waves subsiding to 1 to 2 ft. Water temperature 36 degrees. Tonight, variable winds 5 to 10 kt. Waves 1 ft or less.

Michigan Forecast

Upper Peninsula

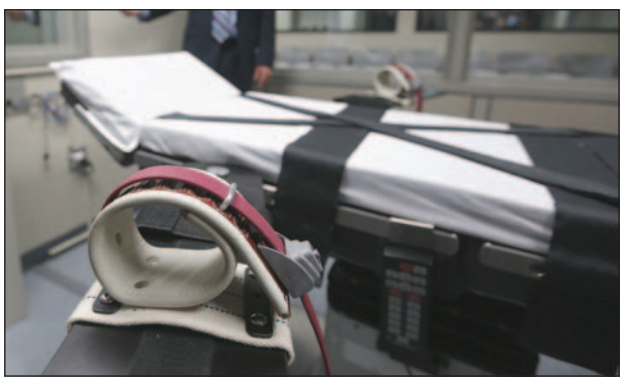
Today we will see mostly sunny skies with highs in the upper 20s. South wind 5 mph. Saturday, skies will be partly cloudy to cloudy with highs in the low 30s. South wind 10 mph.

Lower Peninsula

Expect mostly sunny to partly cloudy skies today with highs in the low 30s. North wind 6 mph. Saturday we will see partly cloudy to cloudy skies with highs in the mid-30s. Light winds.

Oklahoma official: Felt 'pressure' on executions

By SEAN MURPHY
Associated Press



Sue Ogrocki / AP

This October file photo shows an arm restraint on the gurney in the the execution chamber at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester, Okla. Attorneys for 21 death row inmates who will be in a federal court this week challenging Oklahoma's lethal injection procedure outlined their strategy in court documents that reveal grisly new details in the botched execution of an inmate in April.

OKLAHOMA CITY — A longtime lawyer for Oklahoma's prison system said Thursday that he felt pressured by the governor's and attorney general's offices to make sure two executions last spring happened on schedule, even though the state didn't have the drugs to carry them out.

With access drying up to its usual cache of lethal drugs because of manufacturers' opposition to the death penalty, retired Department of Corrections general counsel Michael Oakley talked to counterparts in other states and conducted his own online research before settling on midazolam, a sedative the state had never used before.

"There was pressure from people above us to get it done," Oakley told a federal judge who is considering whether death row inmates have a valid complaint that the state is essentially experimenting on them by using untested drugs or drug combinations during executions.

The lawsuit follows the April execution of Clayton Lockett, who writhed on the gurney, mumbled and tried to lift his head after the lethal drugs were injected directly into his tissue instead of his blood because of problems with an intravenous line.

Before the execution, Oklahoma adopted a new protocol that included midazolam, along with two others designed to stop his breathing and his heart. The 43-minute execution prompted the state to impose a moratorium, which is set to end Jan. 15.

Lockett's execution was initially scheduled for March 20, but the state postponed because it didn't have enough drugs on hand.

In testimony Thursday before U.S. District Judge Stephen Friot, Oakley said he received word from Attorney General Scott Pruitt's office "to go ahead and do something."

Midazolam, a sedative commonly used before surgery, had been used successfully at a much higher dose in Florida, but during a January execution in Ohio, an inmate made gasp-like sounds for several minutes before dying. The drug also was used in a lengthy Arizona execution in July.

Lockett and Charles Warner's execution were each set for April 29, but Gov. Mary Fallin issued a stay for Warner's after the trouble during Lockett's death. Warner is scheduled to die Jan. 15, then three more executions are scheduled through March 5.

Prison officials have said new protocols adopted after Lockett's death, new medical supplies and extensive new training for the execution team will ensure future executions go smoothly. Oklahoma State Penitentiary Warden Anita Trammell said she and prison staff spend nearly an entire day each week conducting drills and preparing for possible problems.

The new execution protocol still calls for using midazolam, but at the higher dose that has been used in Florida.

Larry Sasich, a doctor of pharmacy and an expert on drug efficacy, testified midazolam is a poor choice for executions because the drug can sometimes cause a paradoxical reaction, where a person becomes agitated and combative instead of sedated. He said Lockett likely sensed suffocation from the paralytic vecuronium bromide and excruciating pain from the third drug, potassium chloride.

"He was definitely experiencing pain, and I believe suffering," Sasich said.

A state investigation of Lockett's lethal injection said a faulty intravenous line was primarily responsible for the problematic execution. Capt. Jason Holt, who led the probe, said there was no inquiry into the properties of the drugs used and no recommendation about using midazolam.

Testimony is scheduled to resume in the case on Friday, and Friot is expected to rule early next week.

Lockett was convicted of shooting Stephanie Nieman, 19, with a sawed-off shotgun and watching as two accomplices buried her alive in 1999.

ROADS

From page A1

Snyder acknowledged that a ballot-only road funding fix is "challenging" because voters could defeat it, but said: "Isn't it good we asked our citizens to participate in the process in a constructive way?"

Lawmakers will vote on roughly 10 related bills, many of which wouldn't take effect unless voters approve the ballot measure.

Those include converting the flat taxes of 19 cents a gallon on gasoline and 15 cents per gallon on diesel to taxes that could rise with wholesale fuel prices, to help address declining revenue as people drive less and with more fuel-efficient vehicles. The base fuel tax would likely double, though it wouldn't be a net tax hike at the pump – at least initially – because the sales tax on fuel would go away.

Low-income earners who lost part of a tax break in a 2011 GOP business tax overhaul would see it reinstated, a $260 million budget loss equaling an average $300 gain for qualifying families.

Other bills, not tied directly to the ballot proposal's fate but which would yield at least $50 million more, would force Amazon and other online retailers to collect the sales tax on Internet purchases in the state.

If the ballot measure is OK'd, vehicle registration fees would rise $95 million – partly through a change that would freeze license plate fees.

"Taken as a whole, this is an excellent package," said House Minority Leader Tim Greimel, an Auburn Hills Democrat.

But some advocates of increased transportation funding criticized the Legislature for not putting a tax hike in place in case voters reject the sales tax measure. The Senate voted last month to significantly increase per-gallon fuel taxes without a ballot plan, but that met resistance in the House, which favored no tax hike.

Detroit Regional Chamber President and CEO Sandy Baruah said the group preferred the Senate's approach, "that more closely tied the cost of fixing the roads to the users of the roads – and prevented an increase in the sales tax and the cost of a ballot initiative."

A look at Michigan road funding plan

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Here is a look at a $1.6 billion road and school funding deal brokered by Gov. Rick Snyder and legislative leaders. The fate of the tax hike will rest entirely with voters if approved by lawmakers on Thursday:

BALLOT

In May, voters would be asked to increase the state's 6 percent sales and uses tax to 7 percent and eliminate the sales tax on motor fuel, generating a net $588 million – mainly for $300 million for schools (the equivalent of $200 per pupil) and nearly $100 million for local governments. The plan also would bar the Legislature from spending School Aid Fund revenue on public universities, an issue for Democrats who feel the fund mainly dedicated for K-12 schools has been "raided" in recent years. The revenue could be spent on community colleges, however. Republicans especially wanted to ensure all taxes at the pump go to transportation, which is not the case now.

LEGISLATION

Legislators will vote Thursday on a number of bills that would only go into effect if the ballot measure is approved.

■ In October 2015, Michigan's flat 19-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax and 15-cents-per-gallon diesel tax would be converted so they are based on wholesale prices and significantly rise, with floors and ceilings in place so taxes could not fluctuate significantly with changing fuel prices. Of the $1.3 billion collected, $1.2 billion would go to roads and bridges at state and local levels and about $100 million to public transit. Tax rates were still being tweaked Thursday afternoon, but the 19-cent gas tax likely would more than double but be offset by the removal of the sales tax on gas, at least initially.

■ In the first two years, a combined $1.2 billion of the fuel tax revenue would go to partially pay off long-term debt from past road construction bonds. It is partly a way to phase in spending increases as opposed to immediately infusing all of into the system.

■ In the 2016 tax year, low-wage earners would see more generous tax breaks. As part of a 2011 tax overhaul, Snyder and Republican legislators reduced the earned income tax credit from 20 percent of the federal earned income tax credit to 6 percent. It would go back to 20 percent under a Democratic-backed bill, a $260 million loss in revenue. Advocates say low-income families on average would get $300 more in their pockets.

■ There would be changes to vehicle registration fees next year that would bring in an additional $95 million per year from regular cars and heavy semi-trucks. License plate taxes, which are based on a percentage of a vehicle manufacturer's suggested retail price at the time it is first titled, would be frozen in May. They currently drop by 10 percent each year for the first three annual plate renewals and then stay level. Drivers' fees would not go up but they would not go down, either. Separately, the heaviest freight trucks could pay $1,000 more annually in fees.

■ Road warranties and competitive bidding rules for road work would be revised.

SEPARATE

Lawmakers also will vote on bills that would force retailers such as Amazon.com to collect the sales tax on Internet purchases, which supporters say would level the playing field for brick-and-mortar stores. Retailers with Michigan stores must collect the sales tax when selling items online. But Internet-only stores like eBay do not have to assess it unless they have a physical presence in the state. Shoppers are supposed to voluntarily pay a 6 percent "use" tax for their online purchases when they file Michigan tax returns. But few do. The measure could bring in about $50 million a year and is not directly tied to the ballot proposal's fortunes.

COMMISSION

From page A1

salt, sand and a full staff ready to handle snow and ice, he said.

Csokasy credited his 63 employees with helping turn things around from what he admitted was "a pretty bad situation."

County Commissioner Marletta Seats cast the lone vote against the resolution rejecting the takeover proposal.

Seats said she did not think the county board would get adequate information with county Administrator Bill Wolf acting as liaison to the road commission.

"I don't want to have anything to do with something if I don't have the accurate facts," Seats said.

Commissioner Mac Elliott said the road commission should continue to get support from county officials.

"We want the road commission to be a success story," Elliott said.

That could include having the road commission report to the county board's administrative committee on a quarterly basis, and having a county commissioner as a liaison, he said.

Csokasy said his office has been building good relationships with all county departments, from the sheriff's office to parks.

"We're all in the same bucket together," he said.

The road commission board is responsible for budgets, projects, hiring and firing and all other business. The five members are appointed by the county board.

Contact: jmatuszak@theHP. 932-0360, Twitter: @HPMatuszak

hp SPORTS

Dark-eyed junco a winter mainstay

Outdoors, Page B4

Charles Rex Arbogast / AP

Chicago Bears quarterback Jay Cutler throws a pass during the first half of Monday's game against New Orleans. Cutler lost his starting job Wednesday to backup Jimmy Claussen.

The end of Cutler?

Bears bench beleaguered quarterback less than a year after offering an extension

By ANDREW SELIGMAN
AP Sports Writer

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — The thought crossed Jay Cutler's mind as soon as he found out he was being benched: He might have played his final game for Chicago.

The Bears announced Thursday that they will start Jimmy Clausen against the Detroit Lions on Sunday instead of the man who signed a massive, seven-year deal at the end of last season.

Coach Marc Trestman said Cutler will be available as the backup at Soldier Field, where boos have rained down on a punchless, porous team that is now 5-9 and playing out the string after starting the season with legitimate hopes of a playoff run. They will miss the postseason for the seventh time in eight years and it's unclear whether Trestman — or Cutler — will be back for another try next year.

"I would like to stay here," Cutler said. "I really like it here. I love the guys in the locker room that I get to play with. Clearly, it's a different circumstance now. But going forward, this is where I'd like to be."

The move comes after Trestman pledged his allegiance to Cutler as the starter several times the past few weeks.

"Certainly, it was not an easy decision," Trestman said. "In my mind those types of decisions never are, and I worked it through and think it through not only myself but with our staff."

Trestman said he met with general manager Phil Emery on Tuesday and informed Cutler and Clausen of his decision on Wednesday. He met again with Emery later in the day to discuss his decision and informed the staff that night.

See **BEARS**, page B3

Nam Y. Huh / AP

Chicago quarterback Jimmy Clausen warms up before Monday's game against New Orleans.

COMMENTARY

Benching Cutler doesn't solve Bears' dilemma with 'uncoachable' quarterback

By BRAD BIGGS
Chicago Tribune

If nothing else, Erik Kramer should stay atop the Bears' record book for single-season passing yards and touchdowns.

There will not be any more hollow statistics for Jay Cutler to accumulate in a season gone wrong after the quarterback was benched Wednesday in favor of Jimmy Clausen, who hasn't started an NFL game since he went 1-9 as a rookie starter for the Panthers in 2010.

One question left to ponder is whether Cutler will be gone at the end of the season as coach Marc Trestman and his staff likely will be fired following the Dec. 28 finale at Minnesota. It's probably only a matter of how many folks go with them.

But - and this is the only qualifier - if the Bears offense, minus wide receiver Brandon Marshall, is able to emerge from the wreckage and perform Sunday at Soldier Field against the Lions' No. 1-ranked defense, the blame game will become very interesting.

Trestman's stunning move, one he didn't hint about during a media session Wednesday afternoon, is the latest bombshell in a spectacularly fiery ending to the franchise's most disappointing season in recent memory. It shows the Bears are holding Cutler accountable for his poor play even if the move comes late. He leads the NFL with 24 turnovers and 18 interceptions and Trestman admitted it is "evident" he hasn't gotten the best out of the quarterback.

Cutler was particularly

See **BIGGS**, page B3

Are Michigan fans being realistic about Jim Harbaugh?

Jason Mitchell

It sounds like a maize-and-blue painted Brinks truck is heading out to northern California, ready to dump its riches onto the Jim Harbaugh family estate's front lawn.

That noise off to our east isn't an Ann Arbor gasp of shock about a staggering six year, $48 million rumor of an offer floated about earlier this week for the University of Michigan's head coaching job.

That's a Big House cheer for the return of the past.

We're going to get our man!

He's a Michigan Man!

Jimmy, come home!

Now I know Michigan football fans are all uber-excited. I see your tweets and your Go Blue buddies' comments.

And you have every right to be. After what can best be described as a lost decade or so, you can sniff the good ol' days again.

It's almost as if Bo Schembechler was back on the sidelines and Ronald Reagan was still in the White House.

But will your romanticism of the glory days cloud what is the reality of today's college football game?

To compete with Ohio State (not Ohio, that's the wrong school), you must be willing to get a bit dirty.

Urban Meyer doesn't concern himself with traditions and academics, no sir. He is out to win at any cost, and his school gladly will bend the rules to do it.

Will you? At $8 million a year, you better.

Oh, don't forget "Little Brother" off to the northwest. Michigan State owns you right now, too.

Stings, doesn't it? Sparty has risen to national prominence and has a date in the Cotton Bowl this year.

You have nothing.

Also, dear Wolverines fans, don't assume your Prince Harbaugh is coming.

Don't think for a minute he won't use that ridiculous contract offer as a bargaining chip for other NFL gigs.

He wouldn't do that to Michigan!

Don't be naive. This is the same dude who just a handful of years ago dissed the notion of high academic standards surrounding Michigan football.

Also, the face plant that the 49ers did this season

See **MITCHELL**, page B3

Harbaugh mum on U-M rumors

By MARK SNYDER
Detroit Free Press (TNS)

HARBAUGH

Jim Harbaugh may have the Michigan fan base in a frenzy.

But it's tough to tell if he knows it.

At his weekly Thursday news conference this afternoon, previewing Sunday's game against the San Diego Chargers, Harbaugh brushed off the attention.

Playing off the NFL Network's Wednesday report of a six-year, $48 million offer from Michigan for the vacant head coaching job, the San Francisco 49ers' coach was asked if he was offered a contract by the school.

He barely even flinched, keeping the deadpan expression he has held in most news conference in recent weeks.

"As you know, I only talk about the job that I have," Harbaugh replied, calmly, to reporters at their Santa Clara, Calif. facility. "We've been together a long time, it's a longstanding policy."

But he wasn't really interested in talking about his current job either.

Harbaugh, the former Michigan star quarterback, is being pursued by U-M brass and has been the primary target since Brady Hoke was fired Dec. 2 after four seasons.

Yet he still has a year remaining on the five-year contract he signed with the 49ers in January 2011. So, even though many analysts consider his rift with management unrepairable, he still is their employee.

General manager Trent Baalke told reporters this week that he and Harbaugh would talk after the season, which concludes Dec. 28 against Arizona.

A reporter tried again to get him to talk about his love for U-M "that might supersede all other loyalties at this point," but given the swirl and the open job, he wouldn't bite.

"Again, I really don't want to talk about any other job other than the one I have or anybody else's process," he said.

Rick Osentoski / AP

Detroit defensive tackle Andre Fluellen, left, and defensive end Darryl Tapp react after their sack of Minnesota quarterback Teddy Bridgewater during the first half of last Sunday's game.

Lions prep for chilly Chicago weather

By NOAH TRISTER
AP Sports Writer

ALLEN PARK, Mich. — The Detroit Lions like to call themselves an indoor team with an outdoor mentality.

Now it's time to put that mantra to the test.

Needing one win to clinch a playoff spot, the Lions will play at Chicago on Sunday against the struggling Bears. Although Detroit is heavily favored the weekend, the price for a loss could be severe: The regular-season finale the following weekend is at Green Bay, where the Lions have not won since 1991.

Detroit plays its home games indoors at Ford Field, but the race for postseason position will come down to two outdoor games against division rivals, in potentially difficult conditions.

"We've got to be a physical team and we've got to be able to run the ball," star receiver Calvin Johnson said. "When it gets inclement out there, rain, windy, we've got to be able to work in the trenches. Outside, we have to be able to get those blocks to spring our running backs loose."

Cold weather has not been kind to the Lions over the last two decades. Detroit has lost 13 straight games with the temperature at 35 degrees or below, a streak that began with a playoff loss at Green Bay in 1994, according to STATS.

Detroit has practiced outside this week in chilly Michigan air, and unlike in seasons past, these Lions seem built to play in adverse conditions. Thanks to its bruising defense, Detroit hasn't needed to rely on Johnson and quarterback Matthew Stafford as much. The Lions are particularly tough against the run, so they could be at an advantage if the weather makes passing difficult.

Earlier this season, the Lions cooled down their indoor facility during practice, and this week, coach Jim Caldwell wanted his players outside.

See **LIONS**, page B3

In brief

Bell Foundation to host 'Shop With a Cop'

Detroit Lions running back and Benton Harbor native Joique Bell is giving back to area children this Christmas.

The Joique Bell Foundation will host a "Shop With a Cop" event today from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Meijer at 1920 Pipestone Road in Benton Harbor.

Thirty-five local children who have excelled in school will be escorted through Meijer by a local police officer and select $100 in gifts.

The Benton Harbor Police Dept., St. Joseph Township Police Dept. and Michigan State Police will participate in the event.

St. Pete council rejects deal with Rays

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — The St. Petersburg City Council rejected a deal between the Rays and the city's mayor that would have allowed the team to search for new stadium sites on both sides of Tampa Bay.

The council voted 5-3 Thursday to reject a proposed agreement reached this month by Mayor Rick Kriseman.

"It is disappointing that the St. Petersburg City Council rejected the progress and certainty that this agreement provided," Kriseman said in a statement. "St. Petersburg — and the entire Tampa Bay region — stands to lose our Major League Baseball team and receive nothing in return. This is an unfortunate outcome for St. Petersburg's taxpayers and every fan of the Rays."

Airwaves

Television today

6:30 p.m. (ESPN2) **High School Basketball** Simeon (Ill.) vs. St. Rita (Ill.). (Live)
7:00 p.m. (FS1) **College Basketball** St. Mary's at St. John's. (Live) CC
7:30 p.m. (FoxDetroit) **NHL Hockey** New York Islanders at Detroit Red Wings. (Live)
8:00 p.m. (50) **NBA Basketball** Chicago Bulls at Memphis Grizzlies. (Live)
(Bigten) **College Basketball** Seattle at Minnesota. (Live)
(Csnch) **College Basketball** UT-Chattanooga at Middle Tennessee State. (Live)
(ESPN) **NBA Basketball** Portland Trail Blazers at San Antonio Spurs. (Live)
(ESPN2) **College Football** NCAA FCS, First Semifinal. (Live) CC
9:00 p.m. (FS1) **College Basketball** Alabama A&M at Marquette. (Live) CC
(Showtime) **Boxing** Adonis Stevenson vs. Dmitry Sukhotsky. From Quebec City. (Live) CC
10:30 p.m. (ESPN) **NBA Basketball** Oklahoma City Thunder at Los Angeles Lakers. (Live)
11:00 p.m. (FS1) **College Basketball** Arizona at Texas-El Paso. (Live) CC

Saturday

10:00 a.m. (NBCSports) **English Premier League Soccer** Aston Villa FC vs Manchester United FC. (Live)
11:00 a.m. (ESPN) **College Football** R&L Carriers New Orleans Bowl — Louisiana-Lafayette vs. Nevada. T(Live)
12:00 p.m. (ESPN2) **College Basketball** Southern Methodist at Michigan. (Live)
(FoxDetroit) **College Basketball** Charlotte at Georgetown. (Live)
(FS1) **College Basketball** Louisville at Western Kentucky. (Live) CC
12:30 p.m. (5) (8) (16) **English Premier League Soccer** (Same-day Tape) CC
1:00 p.m. (2) (3) (22) **College Basketball** CBS Sports Classic — North Carolina vs. Ohio State. (Live) CC
(17) (28) (32) **College Basketball** Syracuse at Villanova. (Live)
1:30 p.m. (Csnch) **Skiing** USSA Birds of Prey. From Beaver Creek, Colo.
2:00 p.m. (ESPN2) **College Basketball** Illinois vs. Missouri. From St. Louis. (Live)
(FoxDetroit) **College Basketball** Orange Bowl Classic — Florida State vs. South Florida. (Live)
2:20 p.m. (ESPN) **College Football** Gildan New Mexico Bowl — Utah State vs. Texas-El Paso. (Live)
2:30 p.m. (FS1) **College Basketball** Crossroads Classic — Butler vs. Indiana. (Live) CC
3:00 p.m. (5) (8) (16) **Golf** 2014 Re/Max World Long Drive Championship. From Mesquite, Nev. (Taped) CC
(Bigten) **College Basketball** Western Michigan at Northwestern. (Live)
3:30 p.m. (2) (3) (22) **College Basketball** CBS Sports Classic — Kentucky vs. UCLA. (Live) CC
(7) (13) (41) (57) **College Football** Royal Purple Las Vegas Bowl — Colorado State vs. Utah. (Live)
4:00 p.m. (ESPN2) **College Football** NCAA Division II Championship — Colorado State-Pueblo vs. Minnesota State. (Live) CC
(FoxDetroit) **College Basketball** Oakland at Pittsburgh. (Live)
5:00 p.m. (FS1) **College Basketball** Orange Bowl Classic — Florida vs. Wake Forest. (Live) CC
5:15 p.m. (Bigten) **College Basketball** Crossroads Classic — Notre Dame vs. Purdue. (Live)
5:45 p.m. (ESPN) **College Football** Famous Idaho Potato Bowl — Air Force vs. Western Michigan. (Live)
7:00 p.m. (9B) **NHL Hockey** Chicago Blackhawks at Columbus Blue Jackets. (Live) CC
(NBCSports) **College Basketball** Iona at George Mason. T(Live)
7:30 p.m. (Bigten) **College Basketball** Hy-Vee Big Four Classic — Iowa vs. Northern Iowa. (Live)
(ESPN2) **Women's College Volleyball** NCAA Tournament, Final (Live)
8:00 p.m. (FS1) **UFC Fight Night** UFC: Machida vs. Dollaway - Prelims. Marcos Rogerio de Lima vs. Igor Pokrajac; Renao Moicano vs. Tom Niinimaki. From Barueri, Brazil. (Live) CC
8:25 p.m. (2) (3) (22) **NFL Football** San Diego Chargers at San Francisco 49ers. (Live) CC
9:15 p.m. (ESPN) **College Football** Raycom Media Camellia Bowl — South Alabama vs. Bowling Green. (Live)
9:30 p.m. (ESPN2) **College Basketball** Gotham Classic — North Carolina State vs. West Virginia. (Live)
10:00 p.m. (FS1) **UFC Fight Night** UFC: Machida vs. Dollaway. Lyoto Machida vs. C.B. Dollaway; Renan Barao vs. Mitch Gagnon. From Baureri, Brazil. (Live) CC
10:30 p.m. (Csnch) **NHL Hockey** St. Louis Blues at San Jose Sharks. (Live)
11:30 p.m. (ESPN2) **College Basketball** MGM Grand Showcase — UNLV vs. Utah. From Las Vegas. (Live)

Radio today

7:15 p.m.
Boys high school basketball — Buchanan at St. Joseph (WSJM-AM, 1400)
Boys high school basketball — South Haven at Coloma (WCSY-FM, 103.7)
8 p.m.
NBA — Bulls at Grizzlies (WMVP-AM, 100)

Saturday

Noon
College basketball — SMU at Michigan (WSJM-AM, 1400)
5 p.m.
College basketball — Texas Southern at Michigan State (WCSY-FM, 103.7)
7 p.m.
NHL — Blackhawks at Blue Jackets (WGN-AM, 720)
7:15 p.m.
Boys high school basketball — Lakeshore vs. Otsego (at Coloma) (WSJM-AM, 1400)

Contact us

The Herald-Palladium sports desk is staffed after 7 p.m. nightly. Coaches or managers are asked to report results as soon as possible the evening of the event for publication in the next day's edition.

Phone numbers
(269) 429-1294
(800) 356-4262 ext. 294
Fax number
(269) 429-4392

Email address for reporting results
sports@TheH-P.com

Sports staff

Jason Mitchell
Sports Editor
jmitchell@TheHP.com
429-2400 ext. 749

Ben Sanders
Sports Writer
bsanders@TheHP.com
429-2400 ext. 220

Austin Bornheim
Sports Writer
abornheim@TheHP.com
429-2400 ext. 222

High school scoreboard

Boys swimming

St. Joseph 108, Kalamazoo Loy Norrix 76
200 medley relay — Loy Norrix 1:53.99; 200 freestyle — Ryan Faulkner (SJ) 2:04.7; 200 individual medley — Daniel Abbgy (SJ) 2:15.48; 50 freestyle — Andrew Wells (SJ) 23.61; diving — Ben Ursprung (SJ) 198.65; 100 butterfly — Blaine Warmbein (SJ) 57.2; 100 freestyle — Andrew Wells (SJ) 53.21; 500 freestyle — Patrick Sawyer (SJ) 5:36.66; 200 free relay — St. Joseph (Andrew Wells, Hunter Bard, Eric Maddix, Daniel Abbgy) 1:39.33; 100 backstroke — Noah Talpin (LN) 1:04.86; 100 breaststroke — Steve Finley (LN) 1:11.04; 400 free relay — St. Joseph (Daniel Abbgy, Ryan Faulkner, Liam Walls, Blaine Warmbein) 3:46.91.
Record — St. Joseph 1-1 SMAC, 3-1.

Bridgman 110, Kalamazoo Central 62
200 medley relay — Bridgman (Parker Saladin, James Norris, Connor Behrens, Leif Mitchel) 1:59.15; 200 freestyle — Trayton Saladin (B) 1:47.65; 200 IM — Erik Sriubas (B) 2:20.82; 50 freestyle — Leif Mitchel (B) 25.16; diving — Brennan Miles (B) 116.10; 100 butterfly — Parker Saladin (B) 53.17; 100 freestyle — James Norris (B) 1:01.77; 500 freestyle — Erik Sriubas (B) 5:25.85; 200 free relay — Kalamazoo Central 1:50.82; 100 backstroke — Alex Kilgore (B) 54.37; 100 breaststroke — Matthew Norris (B) 1:16.39; 400 free relay — Kalamazoo Central 4:25.18.

Girls basketball

BUCHANAN 49, MENDON 40

MENDON (40)
Mary Leighton 2 0-0 4, Megan Zinmaster 3 1-5 9, Rachel Frisbie 6 0-1 12, Jenna Gales 1 0-0 3, Emma Eberstein 2 0-4 4, Jackie Friel 2 2-5 6, Sabrina Griffith 1 0-0 2, Brandy DeLeeuw 0 0-2 0. Totals: 17 3-17 40.
BUCHANAN (49)
Jade Mosier 1 2-3 4, Brooke Wesner 6 3-4 18, Chelsey Bennett 4 1-4 9, Selica Jones 2 4-4 8, Ali Kyles 1 2-4 4, Jayla Bibbs 3 0-2 6. Totals: 17 12-21 49.

Mendon	**8**	**8**	**13**	**11**	**— 40**
Buchanan	**14**	**6**	**7**	**12**	**— 49**

3-point goals — Mendon 3 (Zinmaster 2, Gales), Buchanan 3 (Wesner 3). Total fouls — Mendon 16, Buchanan 19. Fouled out — Griffith (M), Bennett (B). Technical fouls — none.
Records — Buchanan 4-1, Mendon 1-4.

Boys basketball

EAU CLAIRE 56, RIVER VALLEY 29

RIVER VALLEY (29)
Jake Clark 1 0-2 3, Gabe Zeiger 2 4-7 9, Greg Palen 4 7-10 15, Devin Alexander 1 0-0 2. Totals: 8 11-19 29.
EAU CLAIRE (56)
Bobby Head 1 2-4 4, Brett Whitehead 1 2-2 4, Kyrek Alexander 4 3-6 13, Jomel Armstead 1 1-2 4, Conner Reed 1 1-6 3, Nickoda Keefer 3 4-5 10, Jalen Davis 5 1-5 11, Tyler Grajauskis 3 0-0 7. Totals: 19 13-30 55.

River Valley	**10**	**4**	**8**	**7**	**— 29**
Eau Claire	**18**	**8**	**22**	**8**	**— 56**

3-point goals — Eau Claire 3 (Alexander 2, Armstead), River Valley 2 (Clark, Zeiger). Total fouls — River Valley 21, Eau Claire 24. JV — Eau Claire 49, River Valley 21.
Records — River Valley 0-2 Red Arrow, 0-4; Eau Claire 1-0, 3-0.

John Leicester / AP

In this Nov.9, 2014 photo, stadium builders from Southeast Asia wait for food from their free canteen after a day's work in Doha, Qatar. Following widespread criticism of labor abuses in Qatar, the World Cup host nation for 2022 is giving better treatment to those who work on projects directly linked to the soccer tournament.

Qatar's labor mess

Country's World Cup preparations drawing outrage

By JOHN LEICESTER AND ROB HARRIS
AP Sports Writers

DOHA, Qatar — Men crammed together, dozens to a room, on bunk beds so close they can reach over and shake hands.

Qatar, on paper at least, has rules that forbid such uncomfortable conditions for its massive workforce of migrant laborers. Yet this is how the government-owned transport company, which the Gulf nation will use to ferry visitors around the 2022 World Cup, has housed some of its workers.

As Qatar employs legions of migrants to build stadiums and other works for the football showcase, widespread labor abuses documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other critics have blackened its name and $160 billion preparations.

Hundreds of worker deaths, many apparently from cardiac arrests, have also fueled concerns that laborers are being overworked in desert conditions and shoddily treated. Reporting this April on a fact-finding mission, the U.N's special adviser on migrants' rights, Francois Crepeau, cited "anecdotal evidence that too many of these mostly young men return home in a coffin."

Problems, The Associated Press found, aren't limited to the construction sector.

Accommodation for drivers of buses and of Qatar's distinctive turquoise taxis is a walled-off compound in the bleak industrial zone of Doha, the capital. Dust-covered cadavers of burned-out buses and broken taxis abandoned on surrounding wasteland make the luxury malls and gleaming towers of central Doha seem far away.

The compound walls and flag over the main gate bear the name Mowasalat. The transporter plans to have 7,000 taxis on the roads by the World Cup.

In one dormitory block, in what drivers said was meant to be a recreation room for table tennis and other pastimes, the AP saw two dozen bunk beds in three tight lines.

The arrangements were apparently meant to be only temporary, but drivers said they had lived like this for months. Without lockers, they hung clothes and towels from bed frames. In a corner, one man gave another a shave. Drivers said around 30 of them were housed there and that other blocks in the compound which the AP didn't visit had similarly crowded rooms.

Yet a 2005 ministerial decree said workers should not be housed more than four to a room or be made to sleep in bunks.

In its company brochure, Mowasalat speaks of "excellent housing facilities" for employees. But even a standard dormitory room the AP saw slept six, also on bunks. Drivers said the close living is physically and morally wearing, with rest difficult and quarrels easy.

Mowasalat did not reply to emailed questions. But it did appear to thin out numbers in the supposed "recreation" rooms after the AP showed a photo of the cramped conditions to Mowasalat executives. Drivers subsequently reached by phone said some of them were moved to other rooms. One said he was transferred from a room with 43 drivers, where he spent two months, to another with 16, still on bunks.

"Thanks for highlighting our plight to some Mowasalat management," another driver wrote by email to the AP. "Since you raised the mat(t)er they have slightly decongested the common room. Still it is no decent way for workers to live but it's a step forward."

Qatar's World Cup organizers are trying to limit the reputational damage of labor abuses by treating their own workers better than the norm.

Officials for the Supreme Committee putting together the World Cup gave the AP a tour of housing for stadium builders from Southeast Asia. They sleep three to a room, some with en-suite bathrooms, and on their own beds, not bunks, with curtains for additional privacy. They even have a pool. In the free canteen, workers heaped their plates with rice, flatbreads and curries.

In his consulting room with the sign "WE ARE HERE FOR YOU" on one wall, the camp's jovial doctor said the workers' health problems are generally no more serious than allergic coughs and sniffles from working in dust and sand, skin itches from sweating, and the aches, pains, sprains and scrapes of manual labor.

World Cup workers are also covered by special regulations which lay out their "right to be treated in a manner that ensures at all times their wellbeing, health, safety and security" and detail how contractors must ethically recruit, promptly pay, and decently house them.

The Supreme Committee's power to award tournament-related contracts also gives it leverage to force improvements.

"I have had to make the phone call several times to contractors to say 'Sorry mate, we've been to your camp. We don't think you're treating your people the way we want anyone on our sites to be treated, so you're out of the running, I can't work with you,"' said Tamim el-Abed, project manager of Lusail Stadium earmarked for the 2022 opening game and final.

"They scrabble around trying to pull together a superficial Band-Aid response. We see through that," he said. "Sometimes they do a genuine turnaround and they improve their facilities."

"It's about culture change," he said.

WMU gives Fleck 6-year extension

By HP STAFF

KALAMAZOO — Western Michigan University announced a six-year extension Thursday for head football coach PJ Fleck.

"I am very excited and very eager to strengthen my commitment to Western Michigan," Fleck said in a news release. "WMU is an 'elite' institution due to the support of the city, staff, donors, alumni and entire university working together as one team I'd like to thank Dr. John Dunn, Kathy Beauregard, who with their unique vision and creativity made me coming here a dream come true for myself and my staff."

Having completed his second season at the helm of Bronco football program, this new agreement will extend Fleck's employment by six seasons to January 31, 2021.

Terms of the agreement include a base salary of $225,000 per year and other guaranteed compensation (secured from external donors) that pushes Fleck's guaranteed total compensation to $800,000 per year. Fleck will also be eligible for various success based incentives.

Fleck coached the Broncos to the best turnaround in WMU and Mid-American Conference history, improving from 1-11 his first season to 8-4 this season. Under Fleck's leadership, the Broncos are bowl eligible for the first time since 2011 and the team's eight wins are the most since 2008.

As the youngest head coach in the Football Bowl Subdivision, Fleck won his first MAC Coach of the Year Award this season and is a semifinalist for the national Maxwell Coach of the Year Award.

The Broncos' 2014 recruiting class, the best in MAC history (according to Rivals.com), produced eighteen members who saw game action this season.

Off the field, Fleck's work has been just as impressive.

The Broncos' "Row the Boat" mantra associated with overcoming adversity has started to take hold in the community and it has served to inspire players and others facing adversity to just "keep rowing".

In the classroom, the Broncos football team posted a 2.91 GPA for the just finished fall semester.

MSU's Dawson has wrist fracture

EAST LANSING (AP) — Michigan State forward Branden Dawson has a non-displaced fracture on his left wrist and will miss the team's next two games.

The school released details on Dawson's injury Thursday, one day after he was hurt in No. 25 Michigan State's 66-46 win over Eastern Michigan.

The Spartans face Texas Southern on Saturday.

Michigan State says Dawson could be back in time for the start of the Big Ten season. The 6-foot-6 senior is averaging 10.8 points and 8.5 rebounds per game.

Dawson was hurt when he landed hard after drawing a foul while going up for a dunk attempt.

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NBA

All Times EST
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	20	6	.769	—
Brooklyn	10	14	.417	9
Boston	9	14	.391	9½
New York	5	23	.179	16
Philadelphia	2	22	.083	17

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	18	6	.750	—
Atlanta	18	7	.720	½
Miami	12	14	.462	7
Orlando	10	18	.357	10
Charlotte	6	19	.240	12½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	16	9	.640	—
Cleveland	14	10	.583	1½
Milwaukee	13	13	.500	3½
Indiana	8	18	.308	8½
Detroit	5	21	.192	11½

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	21	4	.840	—
Houston	19	6	.760	2
Dallas	19	8	.704	3
San Antonio	17	9	.654	4½
New Orleans	13	12	.520	8

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	20	6	.769	—
Oklahoma City	12	13	.480	7½
Denver	10	15	.400	9½
Utah	7	19	.269	13
Minnesota	5	19	.208	14

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	21	3	.875	—
L.A. Clippers	18	7	.720	3½
Phoenix	13	14	.481	9½
Sacramento	11	14	.440	10½
L.A. Lakers	8	17	.320	13½

Wednesday's Games
Phoenix 111, Charlotte 106
Atlanta 127, Cleveland 98
Utah 105, Miami 87
Dallas 117, Detroit 106
Boston 109, Orlando 92
Toronto 105, Brooklyn 89
Memphis 117, San Antonio 116,3OT
Portland 104, Milwaukee 97
L.A. Clippers 102, Indiana 100
Houston 115, Denver 111, OT

Thursday's Games
Chicago 103, New York 97
New Orleans 99, Houston 90
Milwaukee at Sacramento
Oklahoma City at Golden State

Today's Games
Charlotte at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Utah at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Washington at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Toronto at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Brooklyn at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Portland at San Antonio, 8 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Denver, 9 p.m.
Oklahoma City at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

BULLS 103, KNICKS 97

NEW YORK (97)
Wear 4-7 0-0 8, Stoudemire 7-13 2-3 16, Aldrich 5-8 3-4 13, Calderon 5-10 2-2 12, Hardaway Jr. 8-19 2-2 23, Dalembert 2-4 0-0 4, Larkin 2-7 1-2 5, Ja.Smith 1-6 3-4 5, Prigioni 2-4 0-0 5, Acy 2-4 2-2 6. Totals 38-82 15-19 97.
CHICAGO (103)
Dunleavy 2-7 0-0 5, Gasol 8-15 4-4 20, Noah 1-8 2-6 4, Hinrich 3-7 0-0 8, Butler 11-21 9-10 35, Mirotic 4-7 3-4 13, Snell 0-1 0-0 0, Brooks 5-9 5-6 18, Moore 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 34-75 23-30 103.

New York	**20**	**25**	**29**	**23**	**— 97**
Chicago	**30**	**22**	**21**	**30**	**— 103**

3-Point Goals—New York 6-9 (Hardaway Jr. 5-8, Prigioni 1-1), Chicago 12-23 (Butler 4-7, Brooks 3-5, Mirotic 2-4, Hinrich 2-4, Dunleavy 1-3). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—New York 51 (Aldrich 10), Chicago 45 (Noah 13). Assists—New York 19 (Hardaway Jr. 5), Chicago 23 (Butler 7). Total Fouls—New York 24, Chicago 17. A—21,875 (20,917).

NHL

All Times EST
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	33	20	10	3	43	110	87
Detroit	32	17	7	8	42	92	80
Montreal	33	20	11	2	42	88	82
Toronto	32	19	10	3	41	110	91
Florida	30	14	8	8	36	68	76
Boston	32	16	13	3	35	81	83
Ottawa	31	13	12	6	32	82	86
Buffalo	32	13	17	2	28	62	100

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Pittsburgh	31	21	6	4	46	99	71
N.Y. Islanders	31	21	10	0	42	99	89
Washington	31	15	10	6	36	91	85
N.Y. Rangers	29	15	10	4	34	89	79
Columbus	31	13	15	3	29	76	100
Philadelphia	31	11	14	6	28	81	92
New Jersey	33	11	16	6	28	74	96
Carolina	31	9	19	3	21	66	88

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Chicago	32	22	9	1	45	100	64
St. Louis	31	21	8	2	44	94	72
Nashville	30	20	8	2	42	81	59
Winnipeg	32	16	10	6	38	78	75
Minnesota	30	16	12	2	34	86	78
Dallas	30	12	13	5	29	87	103
Colorado	31	10	13	8	28	78	99

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Anaheim	34	22	7	5	49	99	90
Vancouver	31	18	11	2	38	89	88
San Jose	32	17	11	4	38	90	82
Los Angeles	32	15	11	6	36	84	78
Calgary	33	17	14	2	36	97	90
Arizona	31	11	16	4	26	72	100
Edmonton	32	7	19	6	20	66	106

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Wednesday's Games
Ottawa 2, New Jersey 0
Boston 3, Minnesota 2, OT
Dallas 2, Vancouver 0

Thursday's Games
Florida 2, Philadelphia 1, SO
Pittsburgh 1, Colorado 0, OT
Carolina 4, Toronto 1
Washington 5, Columbus 4, OT
Anaheim 2, Montreal 1
St. Louis at Los Angeles
Edmonton at San Jose

Today's Games
Tampa Bay at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Anaheim at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Boston at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Calgary, 9 p.m.

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL
American League
KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Agreed to terms with RHP Kris Medlen on a two-year contract. Designated INF Johnny Giavotella for assignment.
OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Acquired LHP Eury De La Rosa from Arizona for cash considerations. Designated RHP Fernando Rodriguez for assignment. Released RHP Jorge De Leon.
SEATTLE MARINERS — Agreed to terms with RHP Justin Germano, RHP Mark Lowe and INF Carlos Rivero on minor-league contracts.
National League
LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Acquired INF-OF Matt Long from the Los Angeles Angels to complete an earler trade.
BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
NBA — Suspended Milwaukee C Larry Sanders one game for pushing Portland F Nicolas Batum in the back as he elevated toward the basket during a Dec. 17 game.
BOSTON CELTICS — Traded G Rajon Rondo and F Dwight Powell to Dallas for G Jameer Nelson, F Jae Crowder, F-C Brandan Wright, a 2015 first-round draft pick, a 2016 second-round draft pick and a $12.9 million trade exception.
DALLAS MAVERICKS — Reassigned G Ricky Ledo to Texas (NBADL).
FOOTBALL
National Football League
DENVER BRONCOS — Signed TE Dominique Jones. Signed OT DeMarcus Love to the practice squad.
DETROIT LIONS — Placed OT LaAdrian Waddle on injured reserve. Claimed CB Josh Thomas off waivers from the New York Jets.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Signed LB K.J. Wright to a four-year contract extension.
TENNESSEE TITANS — Placed RB Dexter McCluster on injured reserve.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Thursday's scores
BOYS
Auburn Hills Oakland Christian 68, Burton Genesee Christian 48
Baldwin 77, Mason County Eastern 22
Battle Creek St. Philip 51, Waldron 43
Bellevue 65, Litchfield 23
Boyne City 65, Suttons Bay 57
Boyne Falls 80, Mackinaw City 39
Brethren 46, Big Rapids Crossroads Charter Academy 32
Canton 61, Livonia Stevenson 33
Canton Salem 73, Westland John Glenn 66
Cedarville 74, Pickford 35
Central Lake 69, Pellston 39
Chassell 52, Painesdale Jeffers 46
Climax-Scotts 53, Pittsford 46
Concord 58, Athens 28
Constantine 68, New Buffalo 65
Davison 47, Flint Carman-Ainsworth 33
Dearborn Heights Annapolis 61, Riverview 50
Dearborn Heights Crestwood 46, Belleville 40
DeTour 63, Wolverine 21
Detroit Catholic Central 61, Lincoln Park 46
Detroit Loyola 53, Detroit Communication & Media Arts 50
Dollar Bay 61, Ontonagon 50
Dundee 73, Blissfield 55
Elk Rapids 78, Kingsley 49
Erie-Mason 57, Ida 45
Flint Powers 64, Lapeer 44
Flushing 49, Flint Kearsley 32
Frankel Jewish Academy 55, Dearborn Advanced Technology 48
Gibraltar Carlson 54, Taylor Truman 52
Grosse Ile 49, Riverview Gabriel Richard 43
Hanover-Horton 82, Grass Lake 30
Hastings 51, Belding 42
Hillsdale 68, Hudson 24
Hillsdale Academy 54, Colon 50
Houghton 63, Hancock 27
Jackson Christian 78, Camden-Frontier 15
Johannesburg-Lewiston 56, Fife Lake Forest Area 54
Kingston 66, Carsonville-Port Sanilac 44
L'Anse 59, Baraga 49
Lake Linden-Hubbell 69, Calumet 34
Macomb Dakota 65, Rochester Hills Stoney Creek 50
Manchester 57, Jackson East Jackson 50
Manistee Catholic Central 61, Bear Lake 58
Manton 64, Maple City Glen Lake 40
Marine City 39, Algonac 34
Marquette 42, Negaunee 40
McBain Northern Michigan Christian 71, Mesick 18
Memphis 44, Landmark Academy 41
Milan 70, Flat Rock 38
Milford 61, Waterford Kettering 27
Mio 75, Atlanta 33
Montague 51, Hart 17
Mount Pleasant 68, Bay City Central 57
Muskegon Oakridge 68, North Muskegon 54
Napoleon 57, Addison 43
Northport 55, Alba 39
Northville 59, Livonia Churchill 47
Onaway 58, Bellaire 56
Onsted 57, Brooklyn Columbia Central 52
Oxford 49, Rochester 41
Peck 61, Kinde-North Huron 37
Plymouth 65, South Lyon 53
Redford Union 53, Dearborn 46
Republic-Michigamme 57, Rock Mid Peninsula 47
Romulus Summit Academy 56, Carleton Airport 49
Saginaw Michigan Lutheran Seminary 65, Carrollton 52
Shelby 62, Ravenna 16
South Lyon East 53, Wayne Memorial 46
Southfield Bradford Academy 45, Taylor Trillium Academy 31
Traverse City Grand Traverse Academy 65, Traverse City Home School 35
Troy Athens 69, Southfield Lathrup 52
Union City 65, Springport 33
Vandercook Lake 50, Michigan Center 43
Vicksburg 68, Allegan 19
Walled Lake Central 52, Howell 51
Walled Lake Northern 41, Hartland 36
Walled Lake Western 63, Pinckney 53
Waterford Mott 40, Brighton 36
White Lake Lakeland 40, Grand Blanc 35
Whitehall 39, Mason County Central 37
Ypsilanti 73, Wyandotte Roosevelt 36
Ypsilanti Arbor Prep 59, Trenton 49
GIRLS
Beaverton 42, Clare 41
Berkley 59, Ferndale University 18
Birch Run 45, North Branch 23
Birmingham Seaholm 38, West Bloomfield 33
Blanchard Montabella 51, Remus Chippewa Hills 48
Blissfield 57, Dundee 16
Bloomfield Hills 72, Ferndale 17
Bloomfield Hills Marian 58, Romeo 18
Bronson 45, Battle Creek St. Philip 27
Buchanan 49, Mendon 40
Canton 41, Livonia Stevenson 29
Cassopolis 51, Bridgman 31
Croswell-Lexington 58, Yale 40
Deckerville 57, Owendale-Gagetown 22
Detroit Cass Tech 64, Detroit Southeastern 17
Detroit Central 28, Detroit Osborn 4
Detroit Country Day 65, Marysville 21
Detroit Ford 70, Detroit Western International 24
Detroit Renaissance 79, Detroit Cody 41
Flint Carman-Ainsworth 66, Davison 47
Flint Northwestern 58, Flint Southwestern 53
Flint Powers 50, Lapeer 45
Flushing 51, Flint Kearsley 10
Frankenmuth 63, Bridgeport 51
Gaylord 38, West Branch Ogemaw Heights 20
Gladwin 65, Sanford-Meridian 35
Grand Rapids Union 45, Grand Rapids Ottawa Hills 33
Hastings 77, Battle Creek Central 73, 4OT
Houghton Lake 50, Farwell 38
Ishpeming 45, Escanaba 42
Ishpeming Westwood 49, Manistique 24
Ithaca 66, St. Charles 36
Lake Orion 48, Rochester 27
Macomb Lutheran North 49, Clinton Township Chippewa Valley 19
Marlette 31, Brown City 29
Midland Dow 63, Saginaw 51
Millington 77, Essexville Garber 37
Montrose 48, Burton Genesee Christian 23
Mount Pleasant 30, Bay City Central 25
Northport 59, Traverse City Christian 30
Otisville Lakeville 44, Caro 36
Pinconning 65, Whittemore-Prescott 26
Reese 54, Elkton-Pigeon Bay Port Laker 34
Rochester Adams 53, Utica 28
Roscommon 51, Harrison 34
Saginaw Arthur Hill 56, Bay City Western 51
Saginaw Michigan Lutheran Seminary 38, Carrollton 21
Saginaw Nouvel 41, Bay City John Glenn 38
Saginaw Valley Lutheran 52, Merrill 33
Sandusky 44, Harbor Beach 29
Sault Area 64, Cheboygan 32
South Lyon East 56, Wayne Memorial 1
St. Catherine 48, Redford Union 33
St. Louis 33, Breckenridge 31
Tawas 65, Oscoda 22
Ubly 35, Kinde-North Huron 19
Unionville-Sebewaing 58, Cass City 16
Utica Eisenhower 46, Utica Ford 32
Vicksburg 38, Allegan 34
Waldron 48, Bellevue 31
Walled Lake Central 50, Howell 29
Waterford Kettering 58, Milford 33
Waterford Mott 40, Brighton 36
White Lake Lakeland 32, Grand Blanc 25
White Pigeon 47, Marcellus 20
Ypsilanti Arbor Prep 82, Warren Fitzgerald 30

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Thursday's men's scores
EAST
Canisius 60, Stony Brook 59, OT
Duke 66, UConn 56
LIU Brooklyn 69, FIU 58
Quinnipiac 80, Lehigh 65
Rider 62, Morgan St. 48
Temple 82, Delaware 62
Yale 57, Vermont 56
SOUTH
Austin Peay 76, Oakland City 52
Charlotte 75, Appalachian St. 65
Georgia Southern 76, Stetson 67
Jackson St. 66, Southern Miss. 46
LSU 79, UAB 70
Louisiana Tech 79, Nicholls St. 54
Mississippi 71, Coastal Carolina 68
Richmond 65, South Alabama 54
Seton Hall 89, South Florida 69
Virginia 70, Cleveland St. 54
Wright St. 69, W. Carolina 56
MIDWEST
Bradley 80, Eureka 38
South Dakota 55, Montana St. 53
SOUTHWEST
Rice 72, St. Thomas (Texas) 61
FAR WEST
S. Dakota St. 75, Idaho St. 72, OT

BOWLING

LAKESHORE LANES
LAKESHORE LADIES — Cassidie Petlick 677 (257), Melissa Utter 613 (208), Barb Little 563 (204), Stephanie Zdanis 530, Melanee Mangold 530, Jennifer Graham 525. Team: Hartwell & Wolf 2267 (800).
KELLEY'S BOWL
WED. 6:30 P.M. MIXED — James Mummaw 704, David Jones 651 (265), Leif Etter 639, DJ Pepple 636, Tim Mummaw 636, Robin Thompson 557, Sonya Jackson 547 (208). Team: Da Avengers 2272.
WHIRLPOOL LADIES — Carol Bickers 553 (207), Sally Loikits 551 (204), Ami Huff 537, Karyn Fricke 535, Amanda Fifelski 525, Catherine Fortuna 512 (203), Nancy Pinkerton 503. Team: Let's Roll 1826 (677), Ups & Downs 1802 (619).
COLOMA LANES
THURS. IND. — Men: Tom McMichael 746 (268), Brad Hamilton 721 (256), Gary Gargano 695 (258), Danny Gulliver 694, Tom LoPresti 691, Aaron Trapp 659, Steve Moore 651. Women: Stacie Reeves 676 (254), Arica Angelo 625, Amanda Baldwin 601. Team: Fingers 3316 (1123).
FRUIT BELT — Mark Cole 730 (264), Tim Kling 712 (268), Dwayne Jackson 689 (275), Jerry Price 686 (258), Doug Deloof 673 (256), Dennis Marsh 650 (224), Tom LoPresti 641 (233), David Scheuer 646 (248), Wayne Binnington 630 (222), Eric Kreitner 630 (222).

AREA SCHEDULE

Today
Girls basketball
Paw Paw at Dowagiac, 6 p.m.
South Haven at Coloma, 6 p.m.
Edwardsburg at Berrien Springs, 6 p.m.
Lawton at Watervliet, 5:30 p.m.
Gobles at Bangor, 7 p.m.
Marcellus at Hartford, 7 p.m.
Lawrence at Decatur, 7 p.m.
Eau Claire at River Valley, 7:30 p.m.
Brandywine at Lake Michigan Catholic, 7:30 p.m.
Boys basketball
Buchanan at St. Joseph, 7:15 p.m.
Paw Paw at Dowagiac, 7:30 p.m.
South Haven at Coloma, 7:15 p.m.
Edwardsburg at Berrien Springs, 7:15 p.m.
Lawrence at Decatur, 5:30 p.m.
Marcellus at Hartford, 5:30 p.m.
Gobles at Bangor, 5:30 p.m.
Lawton at Watervliet, 7 p.m.
Brandywine at Bridgman, 7:15 p.m.
Covert at Ellington Academy, 7 p.m.
Hockey
Valparaiso at Lakeshore-St. Joseph, 9 p.m.

Saturday
Boys basketball
Coloma Classic: Coloma vs. Fennville, 1 p.m.; Lakeshore vs. Otsego, 7 p.m.
Benton Harbor at I-96 Classic (at Grand Rapids Ottawa Hills), 1:45 p.m.
Wrestling
Lakeshore, Buchanan at Allendale Inv., 9 a.m.
Bangor, Niles, Watervliet at South Haven Inv., 9 a.m.
Brandywine at Michigan Center Inv., 9 a.m.
Benton Harbor, Decatur, New Buffalo, River Valley at Eau Claire Inv., 9 a.m.
Hartford at White Pigeon Inv., 9:30 a.m.
Dowagiac at Gull Lake Inv., 9:30 a.m.
Competitive cheer
Cheer by the Pier 1 at St. Joseph, 10 a.m.
South Haven, Bangor, Berrien Springs, Buchanan, Hartford at Gobles Inv.
Junior college basketball
Lake Michigan Catholic Women at Delta, 1 p.m.
St. Clair County at Lake Michigan College Men, 2 p.m.
Hockey
Lakeshore-St. Joseph at St. Joseph, 3:30 p.m.

NFL

All Times EST
AMERICAN CONFERENCE
East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-New England	11	3	0	.786	442	280
Buffalo	8	6	0	.571	302	254
Miami	7	7	0	.500	327	301
N.Y. Jets	3	11	0	.214	230	360

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Indianapolis	10	4	0	.714	424	317
Houston	7	7	0	.500	324	277
Tennessee	2	12	0	.143	231	390
Jacksonville	2	12	0	.143	211	376

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Cincinnati	9	4	1	.679	311	289
Pittsburgh	9	5	0	.643	389	339
Baltimore	9	5	0	.643	376	267
Cleveland	7	7	0	.500	276	300

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Denver	11	3	0	.786	407	303
Kansas City	8	6	0	.571	322	254
San Diego	8	6	0	.571	303	294
Oakland	2	12	0	.143	213	381

NATIONAL CONFERENCE
East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Dallas	10	4	0	.714	381	328
Philadelphia	9	5	0	.643	416	347
N.Y. Giants	5	9	0	.357	317	339
Washington	3	11	0	.214	257	370

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	6	8	0	.429	364	374
Carolina	5	8	1	.393	288	358
Atlanta	5	9	0	.357	348	369
Tampa Bay	2	12	0	.143	254	367

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Detroit	10	4	0	.714	281	238
Green Bay	10	4	0	.714	436	325
Minnesota	6	8	0	.429	277	297
Chicago	5	9	0	.357	296	409

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Arizona	11	3	0	.786	287	244
Seattle	10	4	0	.714	339	242
San Francisco	7	7	0	.500	251	285
St. Louis	6	8	0	.429	291	297

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Thursday's game
Tennessee at Jacksonville
Saturday's game
Philadelphia at Washington, 4:30 p.m.
San Diego at San Francisco, 8:25 p.m.
Sunday's games
Baltimore at Houston, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Chicago, 1 p.m.
Atlanta at New Orleans, 1 p.m.
Minnesota at Miami, 1 p.m.
Cleveland at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Green Bay at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Kansas City at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
New England at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at St. Louis, 4:05 p.m.
Buffalo at Oakland, 4:25 p.m.
Indianapolis at Dallas, 4:25 p.m.
Seattle at Arizona, 8:30 p.m.
Monday's game
Denver at Cincinnati, 8:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 28
Indianapolis at Tennessee, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Green Bay, 1 p.m.
Jacksonville at Houston, 1 p.m.
San Diego at Kansas City, 1 p.m.
Chicago at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Carolina at Atlanta, 1 p.m.
Cleveland at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
Dallas at Washington, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Miami, 1 p.m.
Buffalo at New England, 1 p.m.
Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants, 1 p.m.
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
New Orleans at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Arizona at San Francisco, 4:25 p.m.
St. Louis at Seattle, 4:25 p.m.
Oakland at Denver, 4:25 p.m.

AHL

Thursday's Games
Charlotte 4, Oklahoma City 2
Lake Erie 4, Milwaukee 3
Today's Games
Toronto at Grand Rapids, 7 p.m.
Syracuse at Hartford, 7 p.m.
Worcester at Manchester, 7 p.m.
San Antonio at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Providence at Portland, 7 p.m.
Texas at Utica, 7 p.m.
Albany at Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, 7:05 p.m.
Adirondack at Rochester, 7:05 p.m.
Hershey at Lehigh Valley, 7:05 p.m.
Springfield at Binghamton, 7:05 p.m.
Bridgeport at Norfolk, 7:30 p.m.
St. John's at Hamilton, 7:30 p.m.

MITCHELL

From page B1

was quite ugly. Harbaugh and his players couldn't even beat the Chicago Bears or the Oakland Raiders!

Sorry if I'm raining on your State Street parade a bit, but keep these two things in mind as the NFL's regular season winds down:

■ If Harbaugh says yes, you'd better be willing to do it his way and realize the NFL will always be on his mind.

■ If Harbaugh says no, you'd better have a fallback plan, and fast. For you would've failed, because your arrogance prevented you from hiring someone a week or two (or three) ago.

Could Prince Harbaugh go to Halas Hall?

What?

I thought "Jimmy" was supposed to come home to Ann Arbor.

But what about that storied NFL franchise that drafted him, the Chicago Bears?

Surely, that can't happen.

But Harbaugh was in Chicago for seven seasons. Like Michigan football, the Bears are a complete and total mess and have bitterly disappointed their own arrogant, overrated football program.

There are similarities.

There also will be money, should the traditionally fiscal-minded Bears part with some.

But there's something potentially available as a head football coach of the Bears (or any other NFL franchise) that one just can't get in Ann Arbor: a Super Bowl title.

You see, Jim's a very competitive guy. Very competitive. Even if he somehow would win a national championship with Michigan football, it's not a Super Bowl victory.

His brother, John, has a Super Bowl title.

If Jim does go to Ann Arbor, you know he won't stay. The lack of a Super Bowl title will always chase him around.

Michigan would merely be a landing spot, a stepping stone, back to the premier level of sport in this country.

Michigan is not a step down!

Yes it is. And if you won't admit it, you're still stuck in the 1980s.

Jason Mitchell is Sports Editor for The Herald-Palladium. Write to him at jmitchell@TheHP.com. Follow him on Twitter @HPJasonMitchell.

BEARS

From page B1

Did Emery support the decision?

Trestman paused for a few seconds, then said: "That's the way we are with each other. When we make decisions, we support it. We give our opinions and then we actively and passionately support each other with the decisions that we have to make. That's the way it's been the last two years. We talk thoroughly about it. We talk analytically about it. We talk passionately about it. And once a decision is made, we support each other."

Cutler was taken aback by the decision, saying that he was "Shocked, I think at first. And then, I think disappointed."

He said he could play for Trestman next season, although there would have to be some mending to the relationship during the offseason.

Asked if he believed the team was committed to him, Cutler responded: "I don't know if I can answer that."

Does he wonder about that?

"Yeah," Cutler said. "I think everyone would. It's a natural response to wonder that."

The switch adds more fuel to the idea that the Bears are in a state of dysfunction and that the future of everyone from Emery on down is open to discussion. There has been plenty of speculation about Trestman, now in his second year, not to mention defensive coordinator Mel Tucker and offensive coordinator Aaron Kromer.

Cutler's future is also in question.

"All I know is there's a lot of money involved in my contract, which comes with a lot of expectations and a lot of responsibility," he said, when asked if the change was fair. "And whenever you're not winning and performing the way you should, there's a likelihood that could happen."

Cutler leads the league in interceptions (18) and turnovers (24) and he was benched after arguably his worst game of the season in Monday's loss to New Orleans. He threw three interceptions and got sacked a season-high seven times as the Bears fell meekly at home to the Saints, 31-15. That performance came after Kromer admitting he was a source behind a report by the NFL Network criticizing the quarterback's ability to identify when plays should be changed at the line.

Kromer might have sealed his fate with his leak and admission. But there could be a long list of personnel taking the fall.

The defense has ranked among the league's worst in two years with Tucker, and the offense has taken a big step back in Year 2 under Trestman.

Then there's Emery, who fired Lovie Smith after a 10-win season in 2012 and chose Trestman over Bruce Arians, now rolling with the Cardinals. He also signed Cutler to that seven-year contract at the end of last season when the Bears could have applied the franchise tag instead.

Even so, the timing of the benching seems curious considering the Bears are out of contention. Trestman, who came with a reputation for getting the most out of quarterbacks, acknowledged this week that has not happened with Cutler.

So the Bears are going with Clausen, the former Notre Dame star. He has appeared in three games and attempted nine passes, completing three.

BIGGS

From page B1

bad in Monday's 31-15 loss to the Saints, who entered with the NFL's 31st-ranked defense. The offense didn't move inside the Saints' 40-yard line until the fourth quarter when the game was out of hand. Cutler is 6-11 as the starter since returning from a high ankle sprain late last season after the offense showed punch with another backup, Josh McCown.

It's impossible to say if Trestman and his staff can coax productive results out of Clausen, who was out of the league last season as he recovered from shoulder surgery. The NFL Network reported, after Ian Rapoport's private conversation with offensive coordinator Aaron Kromer that Kromer publicly revealed, that the coaching staff considered benching Cutler when the Bears trailed the Buccaneers 10-0 at halftime last month at Soldier Field.

Multiple coaches from previous staffs - and Cutler has gone through a long list of offensive coaches - have labeled him "uncoachable" and perhaps Trestman, in a fit of desperation, is acknowledging the same thing. Or maybe the Bears hope that a career-first for Cutler will force him to change his ways, take more culpability and improve his approach from A to Z. Maybe a wake-up call can turn around the career of the 31-year-old.

Cutler's contract includes a hard guarantee of $38 million. However, he is guaranteed $54 million in the event of injury, meaning if he were to play and suffer the kind of serious injury that would keep him off the field through the 2016 season, the club would owe him $54 million.

As it stands, the Bears have paid Cutler $22.5 million this season and must pay him $15.5 million in 2015 whether he is on the team or they release him. If he's on the roster March 12, the third day of the NFL league year, a $10 million guarantee for 2016 kicks in. So, the stakes rise in another three months. ESPN reported there is offset language in the contract that would reduce what the Bears owe. For instance, if the team released him and he signed elsewhere for $5 million, the Bears would owe him only $10.5 million, still a hefty bill for a player not on your roster.

Trading Cutler will be a monumental task if the Bears go that route. Yes, he's a better option than some teams have, but he would come with a big price tag and his history of going through coaches is going to scare some clubs off.

There is a bigger issue for the Bears than money when it comes to Cutler. If they fire Trestman, the presence of Cutler is going to reduce the pool of qualified replacements.

The agents for two coordinators whose names are being mentioned on all of the lists as top candidates for a job this offseason said Cutler would scare off their clients. See where this is headed?

The NFL announced Tuesday the Bears nominated Cutler as their Man of the Year, putting him in the running for the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year award. The club has yet to release the information just as the team had nothing to say about Cutler on Wednesday night.

At least the benching said Cutler finally is being held accountable.

LIONS

From page B1

"You always have to deal with wind conditions. Indoors we don't have the wind," Caldwell said. "You see from previously, when we've had to play in a cold weather, we usually open the doors and try to get the temperature the same. But, obviously in this particular case, we're going to go outside. The ground is not frozen or anything of that nature where we have to worry about the guys having issues with footing and things."

Detroit (10-4) has won three in a row, all at home. The team's most recent road game was last month at New England, and the Lions lost 34-9, but the streak of losses at 35 degrees or lower can be attributed in part to Detroit's futility in general over the last 20 years.

The Lions are five games ahead of Chicago (5-9) in the standings, and the Bears are set to go with Jimmy Clausen at quarterback. He'll make his first start since 2010.

Lions defensive coordinator Teryl Austin says the team was able to find a decent amount of footage on Clausen, even though he hasn't played much.

"We have a good film staff," Austin said. "Obviously, you can go back quite a few years, so we've been able to look at him and look at some of the things that he does. And obviously, you have some preseason tape and some snaps from this year."

hp OUTDOORS

Submitting hunting or fishing photos

Have a behemoth buck, a tremendous turkey or super-sized salmon? Please submit photos to sports@TheH-P.com.

Your photo must be in focus, all persons in the photo must be identified, and the general location of the hunt must be provided (for example, 10-point buck shot in Benton Township, black bear shot near Munising, Mich., etc.)

Restoration funding crucial for Great Lakes

Dave Mull

Anyone who loves Lake Michigan and the rest of the Great Lakes ought to be encouraged by last week's passage of House Resolution 5764, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2014.

If it gets through the Senate and signed by President Obama, it means $300 million per year will be used to target the most significant problems in the Great Lakes ecosystem, including habitat conservation, invasive aquatic species, non-point source pollution and contaminated sediment.

That's a lot of dough.

Not surprisingly, the passage of HR 5764 drew accolades from different conservation groups because of different things.

"This bill is good for the Great Lakes and the millions of people who depend on them for their drinking water, jobs and way of life," said Todd Ambs, campaign director of the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes

See **MULL**, page B5

Sarett Nature Center

Sledding on Pear Hill: 1-3 p.m. Dec. 30 (weather permitting). Call 927-4832. Cost is $1 per student age 7 and up.

Sarett Christmas bird count: 8 a.m. Dec. 31. Join Sarett naturalists to bird the Sarett area for the National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count. Call 927-4832 to register.

Celebrate Winter: 9:30 a.m. Jan. 2. Join Sarett naturalists for a look at winter and snow. Spend the morning learning about animals in winter, snow and winter survival. If there is enough snow, spend the afternoon on skis and snowshoes. Call 927-4832 to register. For kids 6 years and older. Cost is $3 per student for 9:30 a.m. to noon, $6 per student for 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Berrien County Sportsman's Club

Carrying concealed weapon classes: Monthly classes are open to the public. Call Jason Grimm at 927-1793 for more information.

Coloma Rod & Gun Club

Concealed pistol license class: 8 a.m.-5 p.m second Saturday of each month. Call Dan at 621-3370 for more information.

Breakfast: Breakfast is offered from 8 a.m.-noon. every Sunday. For more information, go online to www.colomarodandgunclub.com.

Trap shooting: Thursdays 6:30-10 p.m. and Sundays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Watervliet Rod & Gun Club

Trap shooting: 6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 29

South Haven Rod & Gun Club

Carrying concealed weapon classes: Monthly classes are open to the public. Call Kristy Young at 231-499-7438 for more information.

Submit information for Get Outdoors to sports@TheHP.com or fax 429-4392 by Wednesday.

Yfat Yossifor / Bay City Times

A young female bald eagle flies away after its release from the cage in front of Paty Huddy, left, and Sandy Miner with Tri-County Wildlife Support Team on Monday at Consumers Energy's Karn/Weadock Generating Complex in Bay City, Mich.

Officials release 3 eagles

By MIKE HOUSEHOLDER
Associated Press

BAY CITY, Mich. — Three weak, emaciated eagles that were nursed back to health at a Michigan raptor rehabilitation facility have been released back into the wild.

Sandy Miner of the nonprofit Wildlife Support Team and others opened the birds' cages on Monday and allowed them to fly free from the grounds of Consumers Energy's Karn/Weadock Generating Complex near Bay City.

Two quickly soared out of sight, while one, a juvenile female, flew into a nearby tree and surveyed the scene for a while.

The U.S. Coast Guard rescued that bird in September after receiving a call from a boater who reported that an eagle was swimming in the Saginaw River.

Petty Officer William Peters was among those who rescued the bird. He and others with the Coast Guard dubbed the bird America.

Peters was on hand Monday to watch America's return to nature.

He says her condition "was a complete turnaround from what it was when we picked it up."

The other two eagles were found in poor health elsewhere in Michigan. One of the three tested positive for West Nile virus.

All were cared for at the plant's raptor rehab pen, a facility believed to be among the largest in Michigan.

Miner says "all three of them are very special birds."

Dark-eyed junco a common wintertime visitor

Jonathan Wuepper
Southwest Michigan Wildlife

The dark-eyed junco is the most common bird seen at our feeders in December through March.

Most of the dark-eyed juncos seen in Southwest Michigan are of the common, slate-colored subspecies, of which Mark Parren of St. Joseph photographed this week near Benton Harbor.

But once in a while we see an individual that has pinkish sides, as photographed by Brad Anderson of Bridgman at Warren Dunes last week. The pink-sided sub species of the dark-eyed junco is native to the Rocky Mountains.

Brad Anderson photo

This is the Western variant of the dark-eyed junco, seen earlier this month at Warren Dunes State Park

At least two snowy owls have been reported within the last week by several observers, at the mouth of the Galien River in New Buffalo.

Mark Parren photo

This dark-eyed junco is seen Tuesday in Benton Harbor. Dark-eyed juncos are perhaps the most common bird seen at area feeders from December through March.

As mentioned in last week's column, snowy owls are once again being seen in the United States in higher than average numbers.

John Trapp of Buchanan reported a flock of six tundra swans on Crescent Lake last week. Tundra swans nest in the far north and winter on the Atlantic seaboard, and at scattered locations around the Great Lakes. If inland waterways become frozen, the swans will migrate farther south.

Jonathan Wuepper is an area naturalist. Report your sightings to him at wuepperj@gmail.com.

Outdoors briefs

21 communities get recreation grants

LANSING (AP) — Twenty-one communities across Michigan will receive state grants for projects designed to boost public access to quality outdoor recreation.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources says $877,500 will be divided among the winners. The department received 60 applications.

The money comes from sale of the Recreation Passport, which is required for vehicle entry at Michigan state parks and recreation areas.

Applicants sought funding for projects such as playground development and renovation, trail and walkway development, park and picnic area improvements and improved access for people with disabilities.

Most of the grants totaled $45,000, although some were for less.

A list of winners is available on the DNR website at www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants (click on Recreation Passport Grants).

Bills OK'd to set boat alcohol limit at 0.08

LANSING (AP) — Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder is expected to sign bills subjecting boaters and snowmobilers to the same blood-alcohol limit as drivers.

Bills approved unanimously Tuesday by the Senate would set the legal limit at 0.08 instead of 0.10.

Snyder spokesman Dave Murray says the Michigan State Police want similar limits for operators of boats and land vehicles to ensure they're safe and not a danger to others.

When Michigan changed the legal alcohol limit for driving from 0.10 to 0.08 in 2003, it didn't also do so in snowmobile, watercraft and off-road vehicle statutes.

Proponents of the legislation say having separate blood-alcohol limits is illogical and sends the message that if someone is too drunk to drive a car, it's OK to use a snowmobile or boat instead.

Harmful snails spread in Great Lakes

MUSKEGON (AP) — Scientists say an invasive European snail that carries parasites fatal to some aquatic birds is spreading across the Great Lakes region.

Researchers with 10 universities and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have detected faucet snails in many new locations over a three-year period.

The snails harbor intestinal flukes that kill ducks and waterbirds known as coots. When birds eat the snails, the parasites attack the birds' internal organs.

The faucet snail is about a half-inch in height at full size. It ranges in color from brown to black and has a distinctive whorl of concentric circles resembling tree rings on its shell opening cover.

It spreads easily and is hard to kill.

Carl Ruetz of Grand Valley State University's Annis Water Resources Institute said Monday the discovery was made as scientists monitored the condition of Great Lakes wetlands.

The research team also has helped locate and combat invasive aquatic

See **BRIEFS**, page B5

Ski report

Latest skiing conditions, as supplied by SnoCountry Mountain Reports. Conditions are subject to change due to weather, skier/rider traffic and other factors. Be aware of changing conditions. For more information go to www.snocountry.com.

Michigan

Bittersweet (Otsego) — Sat Reopen 12/17 MG machine groomed 12 - 24 base 17 of 20 trails

Timber Ridge (Gobles) — Closed for snow sports

Swiss Valley (Jones) — Opening soon for snow sports

Alpine Valley — Mon Reopen 12/17 MG machine groomed 18 - 28 base 11 of 25 trails, 6 of 14 lifts, Mon-Thu: 10a-10p; Fri: 10a-11p; Sat: 9a-11p

Sun 9a-10p; Dec 24: 9a-5:30p; Dec 25: 3p-11p;

Apple Mountain — Plan to Open 12/19

Bay Mountain — Plan to Open 12/19

Big Powderhorn — Sat Reopen 12/20 MG machine groomed 2 - 24 base 13 of 33 trails, 40% open, 4 of 10 lifts, Mon-Fri: 9a-4p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4p; 85% open, 6 of 12 lifts, Mon-Thu: 3p-10p; Fri: 10a-10p; Sat: 9a-10:30p; Sun: 9a-9p;

Blackjack — Plan to Open 12/19

Boyne Highlands — Tue 4:57 pm MG machine groomed 30 - 50 base 35 of 55 trails

64% open, 375 acres, 7 of 10 lifts, Mon/Tue: 9a-4:30p, Wed-Fri: 9a-9p

Sat/Sun: 9a-4:30p;

Boyne Mountain — Tue 4:58 pm MG machine groomed 30 - 50 base 21 of 60 trails

35% open, 235 acres, 3 of 12 lifts, Mon-Fri: 9a-4:30p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4:30p;

Caberfae Peaks — Tue 9:42 am packed powder machine groomed 20 - 48 base 27 of 34 trails

80% open, 4 of 5 lifts, Mon-Thu: 10a-5p; Fri: 10a-9p; Sat/Sun: 10a-8p;

Cannonsburg — Reopen TBA

Crystal Mountain — Tue 7:49 am hard packed machine groomed 36 - 52 base 24 of 50 trails

48% open, 65 acres, 5 of 8 lifts, sm Mon-Thu: 9a-4:30p; Fri: 9a-9p

Sat: 9a-9p; Sun: 9a-4:30p; Dec 19-23, 26-Jan 04: 9a-4p; Dec 24: 9a-4:30p

Dec 25: 10a-9p;

Hanson Hills — Plan to Open 12/20

Hickory Hills — Plan to Open 12/19

Indianhead — Mon Reopen 12/19 packed powder machine groomed 6 - 36 base 15 of 30 trails

161 acres, 4 of 9 lifts, Mon-Fri: 9a-4p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4p;

Marquette — Sat Reopen 12/18 MG machine groomed 23 - 27 base 8 of 25 trails

32% open, 2 of 4 lifts, Thu/Fri: 10a-5p; Sat/Sun: 10a-5p; Open Thu-Sun;

Mont Ripley — Tue 5:37 am variable machine groomed 12 - 24 base 16 of 24 trails

67% open, 3 of 3 lifts, Mon-Fri: 3p-9p; Sat/Sun: 10a-5p;

Mount Bohemia — Opening Soon for Snow Sports

Mount Brighton — Reopen TBA

Mt Holly — Sat Reopen 12/17 MG machine groomed 14 - 28 base 18 of 19 trails

See **SKI**, page B5

2 moose visit UP cabin for snacks

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GWINN, Mich. — Two male moose have become regulars at an Upper Peninsula cabin where they're treated to healthy snacks, including alfalfa, apples and carrots.

The moose visit the log cabin in Marquette County's Gwinn community around the same time each day, The Grand Rapids Press reported. They've been nicknamed Sunshine and Jumper by their human friends, who first encountered the pair about six weeks ago.

The animals had been eating deer bait on the property following a heavy snow, indicting they were hungry, according to a woman who has been feeding the moose. She asked the newspaper not to use her full name because she doesn't want anyone else to disturb the animals.

The woman and the couple who own the property began coaxing the moose to come closer to the cabin by gradually placing the bait, and then eventually vegetables, until they were comfortable enough coming up to the window.

The moose have gotten used to looking into the open window to ask for root vegetables. They've even become familiar with the sound of a car pulling up to the property.

Moose are a native species in Michigan, but their numbers had dwindled significantly by the late 1800s, according to the state Department of Natural Resources. After being reintroduced into the Upper Peninsula in the 1980s, their populations had grown to around 430 in the western region, the agency estimated in 2011. DNR officials believe there are fewer than 100 moose in the eastern Upper Peninsula.

Michigan officials seek tips in illegal moose kill

BARAGA, Mich. — Investigators are seeking the public's help in solving the illegal killing of a bull moose in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

The Department of Natural Resources says the carcass was discovered last weekend. Based on evidence collected at the site, conservation officers believe the animal was killed in late November in the Three Lakes area of Baraga County.

A cash reward is offered for information leading to the arrest of the poacher.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Report All Poaching hotline number is 800-292-7800.

A sailfish is tagged with an external streamer off Miami.
Patrick Farrell / Miami Herald / TNS

Name that fish

Florida taxidermist launches fish-tagging program

By SUE COCKING
Miami Herald (TNS)

With more and more fisheries being closed or restricted worldwide in the name of conservation, Bill Dobbelaer, general manager of Gray Taxidermy in Pompano Beach, Fla., saw a negative impact on his business and on the charter boats that sell his company's fish mounts to their customers.

"When you keep releasing fish, the customers don't feel a connection to that fish," Dobbelaer said. "The people don't tip, don't mount, don't return and don't tell their friends to go. We need something to link these people to the fish they are letting go."

So, after two years of consultations with charter captains, marina owners and fisheries scientists, Gray Taxidermy is preparing a January launch of a nonprofit, worldwide, interactive fish-tagging program involving some 10,000 charter-boat crews, their customers and the scientific community.

With money raised from corporate sponsors, Dobbelaer just received a shipment of 10,000 external streamer tags, plus tagging sticks and data cards, to be distributed free to charter boats starting next month. Participating crews will log their fish tag/releases at GrayFish TagResearch.org with anglers naming their own fish. Top taggers will be rewarded with prizes, as well as those who recapture and report tagged fish. Participating marinas would become satellite research centers.

The program's scientific advisors, professors David Kerstetter of Nova Southeastern University and Arthur Mariano of the University of Miami, will determine what species need to be tagged, then crunch the data and report their findings on the website.

Initially, the program will focus on tagging sailfish and sharks in South Florida and Costa Rica, and may extend to barracuda, which, some guides and anglers (especially in the Keys) say are on the decline.

Mariano said there are some shortcomings to conventional tags: They don't provide fine details of fish movements and historically have had only a 0.5 percent to 2 percent return rate, depending on the species. But he said recapture data shows how long the fish live and how fast they grow. Satellite tags, which are implanted permanently or programmed to pop off after a certain interval, track fish minute-to-minute and provide a treasure trove of data. But they are pricey at about $4,000 apiece.

Dobbelaer says current tagging programs have had limited success because they are targeted to wealthy recreational fishermen who buy tagging kits but only use them occasionally. Supplying the most successful charter boats with free tags, he said, is expected to yield much more information because those vessels run upwards of 250 trips per year.

"It's a way to get the guys who are fishing most involved in producing data for scientists," Dobbelaer said.

Proposed deer hunting rule divides Indiana hunters

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — A proposed rule change that would allow Indiana hunters to use high-powered rifles for deer hunting has divided the state's more than 260,000 deer hunters, some of whom say it would give hunters an unfair advantage.

Proponents of the rule change being considered by the state's Natural Resources Commission argue that allowing high-powered rifles would be just as safe as the weapons currently allowed and give hunters more tools to choose from. Indiana's bag limits on deer would prevent deer populations from declining, they say.

But some Indiana deer hunters strongly oppose using high-powered rifles, which enable hunters to fire a bullet over longer distance, saying they give hunters an unfair advantage and their use would eventually harm deer populations.

Doug Allman, a spokesman for the Indiana Deer Hunters Association, said the proposed change also poses a threat to efforts to expand hunting into suburban areas where deer can become overpopulated. He said neighbors and municipal officials often cite concerns about the dangers posed by long-range firearms when discussing hunting in urban areas.

Some Midwestern states, including Missouri, Wisconsin and Kentucky, already allow the use of high-powered rifles, while Ohio, Illinois and others have firearms restrictions similar to Indiana's.

Matt Underwood, a 25-year-old hunter from Henryville, said Indiana's current rules force many hunters into using shoulder-slamming shotgun slugs. The rule-change proposal would allow for the use of smaller rifle rounds that provide substantially less kick.

"I think that by opening up these different cartridges, it's going to provide cheaper opportunities to get these nice, reliable deer rounds," Underwood said.

Indiana once allowed deer hunters to use only shotguns firing rifled slugs, or bows and arrows. But in recent years, the state has allowed the use of muzzle-loading rifles, handguns, crossbows and rifles using some types of pistol cartridges as deer seasons expanded and bag limits increased in response to expanding deer populations.

The proposed rule change would allow for any rifle firing a .243-caliber round or larger.

If approved by the Natural Resources Commission, which is seeking public comments on the proposal, the new rules could take effect as early as next deer firearms season.

The Department of Natural Resources, whose conservation officers enforce hunting laws set by the commission, hasn't taken a position on the matter, said spokesman Phil Bloom.

Indiana hunters shot a record 136,248 deer in 2012 over the course of hunting seasons stretching from October to January.

FISHING REPORT

For the week ending Dec. 13

Southwest Lower Peninsula

St. Joseph River: Steelhead fishing was fair with most anglers picking up one or two fish per trip. Water levels were still a bit high.

Black River: The river was producing some steelhead and a few brown trout.

Kalamazoo River: Steelhead fishing was fair with anglers usually getting a couple fish per trip. Water levels are still coming down and have started to clear up. Try drifting spawn and wax worms or casting crank baits and plugs.

Grand River near Grand Rapids: The river is still producing some steelhead. Some days are better than others.

Grand River near Lansing: Pike and walleye anglers can be found near the dams. Most are using live bait such as sucker minnows. A few reports came in regarding steelhead at Portland. Try floating a jig with spawn, minnows or crawlers.

Muskegon: Piers anglers caught whitefish when jigging a single egg.

Muskegon Lake: The lake was producing a few whitefish for those fishing at night.

Muskegon River: The higher waters levels did bring fresh steelhead into the river system. Those fly fishing have done well with egg patterns. Anglers are catching steelhead, some brown trout and even the occasional lake trout.

— Michigan Department of Natural Resources

SKI

From page B4

95% open, 7 of 14 lifts, sm Mon-Thu: 10a-10p; Fri: 10a-11p; Sat: 9a-11p Sun: 9a-10p;

Mt. Holiday — Opening Soon for Snow Sports

Mulligan's Hollow — Sun Reopen 12/20 variable 18 - 20 base 1 of 8 trails, 13% open, 1 of 5 lifts, Sat/Sun: 11a-6p; Open Sat/Sun; Dec 22-24 26, 29-Jan 02: 11a-6p; Dec 25, Jan01: Not open;

Norway Mountain — Sat Reopen 12/19 hard packed machine groomed 10 - 47 base 12 of 17 trails, 71% open, 6 of 6 lifts, sm Mon-Fri: 10a-4p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4p; 9a-4p;

Nub's Nob — Tue 8:17 am MG machine groomed 48 - 58 base 43 of 53 trails

82% open, 201 acres, 4 of 11 lifts, sm Mon-Fri: 9a-4:30p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4:30p;

Otsego Ski Club — Reopen 12/20

Pine Knob — Sat Reopen 12/17 packed powder machine groomed 16 - 38 base 17 of 17 trails 100% open, 12 of 12 lifts, Mon-Thu: 10a-10p; Fri: 12p-10p Sat/Sun: 9a-5:30p;

Pine Mountain — Sat Reopen 12/17 packed powder machine groomed 16 - 22 base 11 of 27 trails, 41% open, 3 of 5 lifts, sm Wed-Fri: 2p-8p; Sat: 9a-8p; Sun: 9a-4p Open Wed-Sun;

Shanty Creek Resort — Mon Reopen 12/18 packed powder machine groomed 6 - 24 base Thu/Fri: 9a-4:30p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4:30p; Open Thu-Sun;

Ski Brule — Mon 9:19 am hard packed machine groomed 36 - 48 base 12 of 17 trails

71% open, 5 of 11 lifts, sm Mon-Fri: 9a-4p; Sat/Sun: 9a-4p;

Snow Snake — Fri Reopen 12/19 MG machine groomed 12 - 24 base 6 of 10 trails

60% open, 2 of 5 lifts, Fri: 4p-10p; Sat: 10a-10p; Sun: 10a-5p Open Fri-Sun;

Treetops — Sun Reopen 12/18 variable 54 - 54 base Fri: 10a-6p Sat/Sun: 10a-6p; Open Fri-Sun;

BRIEFS

From page B4

plants. It plans to report soon on the spread of exotic fish species.

"This is another example of how our natural systems are constantly at risk, and why it is so important to remain vigilant, as is being done through this basin-wide monitoring effort," said Alan Steinman, director of the institute.

MULL

From page B4

Coalition. "It will help keep restoration efforts on track and benefit the region's environment and economy."

Even Ducks Unlimited representatives chimed in favorably.

"Carefully planned legislation to continue support of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative lets stakeholders make better, more productive plans," said David Brakhage, director of DU's Great Lakes and Atlantic office. "And we all reap the benefits through better habitat for waterfowl, improved recreation and clean drinking water. Projects to achieve those GLRI-desired outcomes are programmatically aligned with Ducks Unlimited's goals to improve habitat for waterfowl. This legislation is a vital piece of conservation in the Great Lakes for Ducks Unlimited and our members."

When you grow up and live near Lake Michigan, spend a lot of time fishing on it or enjoying its beaches, the lake not only tends to lose some of its awesomeness but some of its practical importance, too. For instance, how many of us think about all the people who count on them for drinking water?

Speaking for myself, I was a beach kid back in the 1960s and '70s, growing up a few blocks from the lake in Michigan City, Indiana. My family and I enjoyed the beach that was part of the Duneland Beach neighborhood, and we knew our heavily chlorinated drinking water came right out of Lake Michigan.

Before I learned much about the fishing, I spent a lot of time snorkeling, floating along the surface over a shallow bottom, often observing crawfish crawling around on the sandy bottom and small schools of perch and other species. The lake was full of life, even as silvery alewives, dead and dying, floated in to shore.

Back then the environmental movement was just getting started, and people started caring about the chemicals that industry was pumping into the water and speaking out against them. A lot of pollution has been stopped, but a lot of damage, in the form of contaminated sediments, still remains.

In the early 1980s, I got into fishing Lake Michigan with my mentor in journalism, the late Al Spiers of Michigan City.

In 1999, I lucked into the job of a lifetime and became editor of Great Lakes Angler Magazine, which allowed me not only to spend a lot of time on Lake Michigan but on the other Great Lakes, too.

Perhaps this close association with them makes me extra sensitive to the problems they face from polluters, invasive species and fluctuating water levels. I know I'm certainly not alone in caring about them.

Let's encourage our Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow to make sure this legislation passes to keep our lakes getting better and better.

Outdoors columnist Dave Mull lives in Paw Paw. Email him at dave.sportfish.mull@gmail.com

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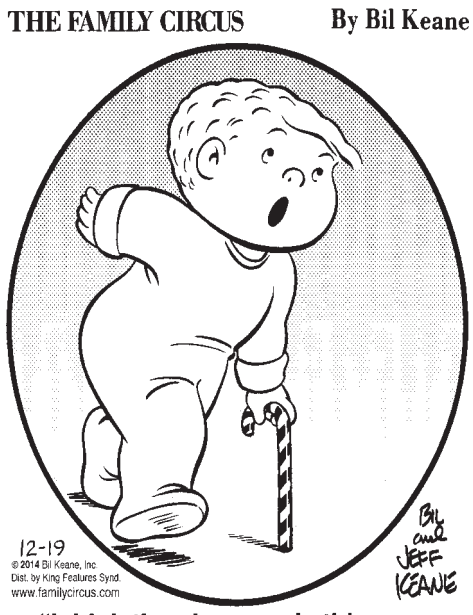
BEETLE BAILEY

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

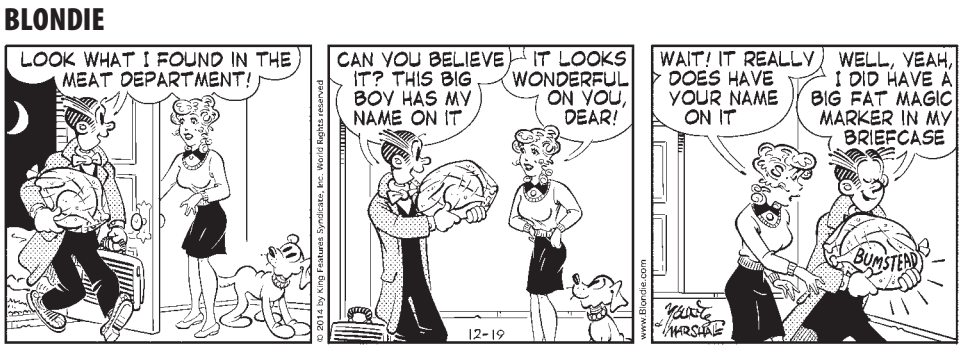


"I think the elves made this cane to fit them, not me."

DENNIS THE MENACE

"HOW CAN I BE A 'BACKSEAT DRIVER' WHEN I CAN'T EVEN REACH THE STEERING WHEEL?"

BLONDIE


LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN THE MEAT DEPARTMENT!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? THIS BIG BOY HAS MY NAME ON IT
IT LOOKS WONDERFUL ON YOU, DEAR!
WAIT! IT REALLY DOES HAVE YOUR NAME ON IT
WELL, YEAH, I DID HAVE A BIG FAT MAGIC MARKER IN MY BRIEFCASE
BUMSTEAD
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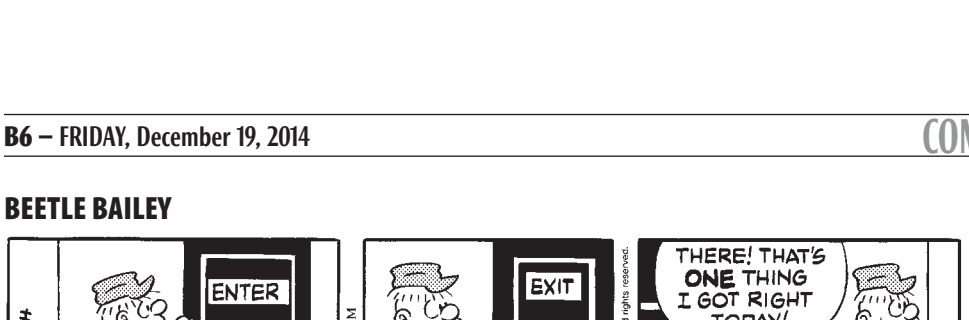
www.Blondie.com
12-19

BABY BLUES

WHAT DO YOU THINK I SHOULD NAME MY PONY?
SANTA'S NOT BRINGING YOU A PONY FOR CHRISTMAS, ZOE.
HE MIGHT.
HE WON'T.
MOM! DAD'S CRUSHING MY CHILDHOOD DREAMS AGAIN!
REINDEER EAT PONIES.
DARRYL!
babyblues.com

HI & LOIS


YOUR BABY SISTER IS SO CUTE!
I HAVE TO GET MY PHONE AND TAKE A PICTURE.
TURN OFF THE CHARM. YOU'RE MONOPOLIZING MY GIRLFRIEND.
HiandLois.com
12-19

BC

CURTIS

MY MOTHER TOOK ME AND THE LITTLE TROLL TO THE DEPARTMENT STORE TO SEE SANTA
DID YOU TELL SANTA YOU WERE A GOOD BOY ALL YEAR, BARRY?
I SURE DID!!
IT WAS SO EMBARRASSING! I'M JUST GLAD NONE OF MY HOMEBOYS SAW ME STANDIN' IN LINE WITH MY MOTHER AND MY DORKY LITTLE BROTHER!
HIS PROBLEMS RUN SO DEEP, A SUBMARINE CAN'T REACH THE BOTTOM
I CAN HEAR YOU, ELF-LOVER!
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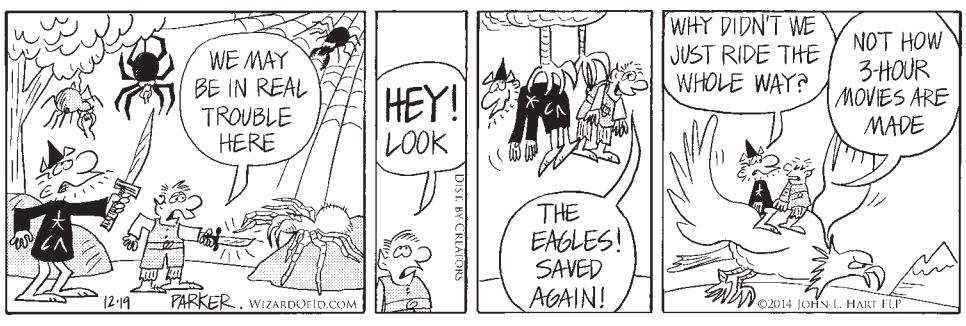
12-19

WIZARD OF ID


WE MAY BE IN REAL TROUBLE HERE
HEY! LOOK
THE EAGLES! SAVED AGAIN!
WHY DIDN'T WE JUST RIDE THE WHOLE WAY?
NOT HOW 3-HOUR MOVIES ARE MADE
12-19 PARKER. WIZARDOFID.COM
DIST. BY CREATORS
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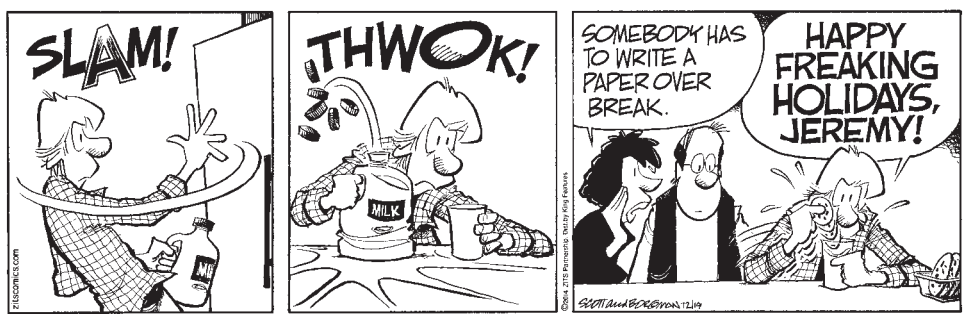
ZITS



DILBERT

DILBERT CALLED TO SAY HE'D BE LATE FOR YOUR MEETING.
HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT HAVING A FREAK ACCIDENT WHILE VACUUMING NAKED.
DID YOU TELL HIM TRAFFIC WAS BAD?
MORE OR LESS.
Dilbert.com DilbertCartoonist@gmail.com
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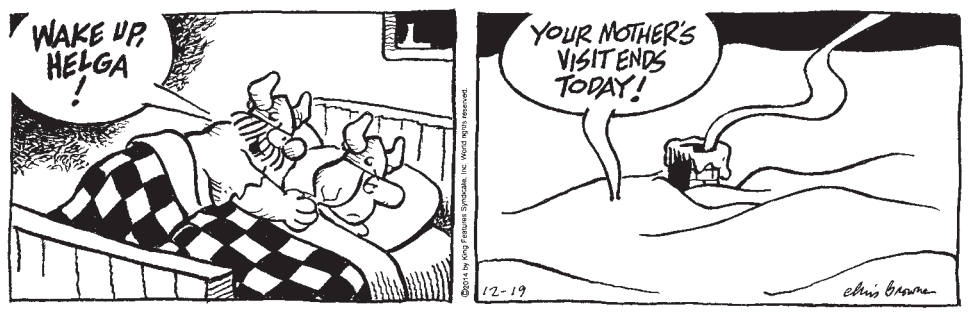
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



GARFIELD

LIZ, I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO GET YOU FOR CHRISTMAS!
OH, JON, YOU'RE ALL I NEED FOR CHRISTMAS
MAYBE SHE COULD EXCHANGE YOU FOR SOMETHING GOOD
www.facebook.com/garfield
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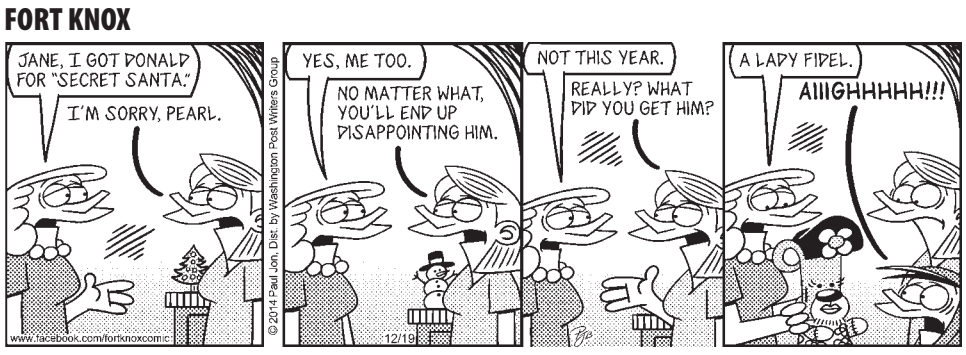
JIM DAVIS 12-19

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

FORT KNOX


JANE, I GOT DONALD FOR "SECRET SANTA."
I'M SORRY, PEARL.
YES, ME TOO.
NO MATTER WHAT, YOU'LL END UP DISAPPOINTING HIM.
NOT THIS YEAR.
REALLY? WHAT DID YOU GET HIM?
A LADY FIDEL.
AIIIGHHHHH!!!
www.facebook.com/fortknoxcomic
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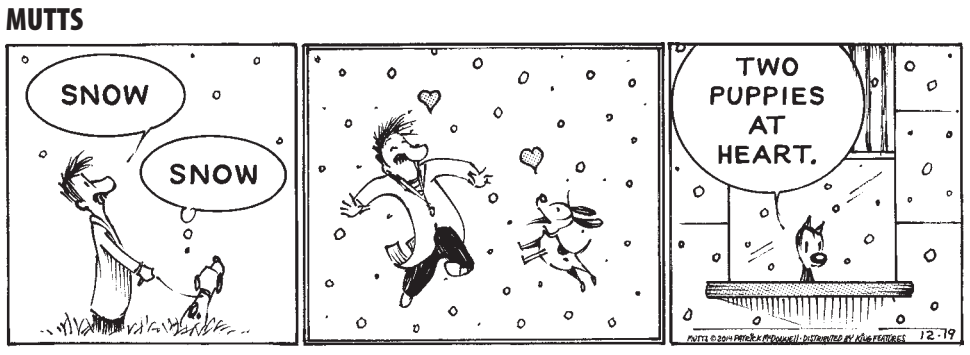
MUTTS



PICKLES

LOOK, EARL, I GOT MY NAILS DONE FOR CHRISTMAS.
SEE? EACH FINGER IS A DIFFERENT CHRISTMAS ELF.
AND MY THUMBS ARE SANTA AND MRS. CLAUS.
THE CRUD UNDER THIS NAIL KINDA LOOKS LIKE MUDDY SNOW ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD ON CHRISTMAS DAY.
12/19

SALLY FORTH

MERRY CHRISTMAS, SWEETIE!
MOM! GERALD! COME IN!
WHERE SHOULD WE PUT OUR BAGS, DEAR?
YOU AND GERALD CAN SLEEP IN MOM'S BED, GRANDMA.
I... I...
HIL, STOP IT. THAT'S HOW SUPERVILLAINS START.
COME ON, GRANDMA. I'LL SHOW YOU TO THE GUEST ROOM.
12-19

Prime Time TV

FRIDAY EVENING DEC. 19

	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
ABC 7 13 41 57	Wheel of Fortune	Last Man Standing	:31 Cristela	Shark Tank A mobile wedding service.		:01 20/20 CC	
CBS 2 3 22	Entertainment Ton.	The Amazing Race ((F)) (N)		A Home for the Holidays (N) CC		Blue Bloods "Knockout Game" CC	
NBC 5 8 16	Access Hollyw'd	Caught on Camera With Nick Cannon		Dateline NBC CC			
FOX 17 28 32	Modern Family	MasterChef The winner is announced.		Hell's Kitchen The winner is chosen.		Fox 17 News at 10:00PM (N) CC	
PBS 34	Money Sense	Washington Week	Economic Outlook	Purdue 80th Anniversary Christmas Show		Penn-Choirs: Songs of the Season	
CW 25	Big Bang Theory	★★ Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol ('62, Fantasy)			Panda Holiday	News	Seinfeld CC
MNT 50	Family Feud	NBA Basketball Chicago Bulls at Memphis Grizzlies. From the FedEx Forum in Memphis, Tenn. (N) (L)					Big Bang Theory
WCIU 26	Mike & Molly	House of Payne	House of Payne	We There Yet?	We There Yet?	Family Guy	Raising Hope
WHME 46	M*A*S*H CC	Lester Sumrall	Paid Program	The Harvest Show News and music.		Full Circle	Joyce Meyer
WSBT 22	:00 WSBT News at 7	ES.TV (N) CC	ES.TV CC	Dr. Phil A gamer is unable to hold a job.		News	Dish Nation (N)
A&E	:00 Criminal Minds	Criminal Minds "25 to Life" CC		Criminal Minds "Corazon" CC		Criminal Minds "The Thirteenth Step"	
AMC	101 Dalmatians	★★ The Sorcerer's Apprentice ('10) Nicolas Cage. A master wizard takes on a reluctant protege.					Blake Shelton
Animal	Tanked	Tanked CC		Tanked CC		Tanked CC	
BET	106- Park	Nellyville CC		★ I'm in Love With a Church Girl			
Big Ten	Big Ten	College Basketball Seattle at Minnesota. (N)				BTN Live	
Bravo	Guide-Divorce	Bravo's First Looks		★★ How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days ('03) Kate Hudson, Matthew McConaughey.			
Cartoon	Regular	King/Hill	King/Hill	Cleveland	Cleveland	American	American
Cinemax	X-Men: Last	:15 ★★★ Charlie's Angels ('00, Action) Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore. CC				★★ 300: Rise of an Empire ('14)	
CMT	Raising	To Be Announced					Cops Rel.
CNBC	Factories	Shark Tank CC		The Profit		The Filthy	The Filthy
CNN	OutFront	Anderson Cooper		The Sixties		The Sixties "1968"	
Comedy	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Kevin Hart: Laugh		Hot Tub Mach.	
CSNC	Sports	College Basketball				The	TV
Discovery	:00 Gold Rush	Gold Rush: Pay Dirt "Colossal Clean Up"		Gold Rush "Grandpa John" (N) CC		:01 Alaskan Bush People (N) CC	
Disney	:05 The Polar Express			Phineas	Wander	I Didn't	Liv-Mad.
DIY	Vanilla	Caves	Caves	Caves	Caves	Raising House (N)	
E!	E! News	Take the Hamptons		Take the Hamptons		The Soup	The Soup
Encore	Interview-Vamp	★★ The Lone Ranger ('13) Johnny Depp. An Indian warrior and a lawman unite to fight corruption.					White House
ESPN	NBA	NBA Basketball: Trail Blazers at Spurs					Basket
ESPN2	Basket	College Football NCAA FCS, First Semifinal: Teams TBA. (N) (L)					
ESPNC	Friday	Friday Night Lights		30 for 30 CC			
Family	Home Alone	★★★ Elf ('03, Comedy) Will Ferrell, James Caan, Bob Newhart.				National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation	
Food	Diners	Restaurant: Im.		Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners
Fox News	Record	The O'Reilly Factor		The Kelly File (N)		Hannity (N)	
Fox Sports	NHL Hockey New York Islanders at Detroit Red Wings.					Red Wings Live (N)	
FX	Snow White	★★★ Avatar ('09) Sam Worthington, Voice of Zoe Saldana. A former Marine falls in love with a native of a lush alien world.					
G4	Soup	Soup	Soup	2 Months	2 Months	2 Months	2 Months
Golf	Feherty	Feherty		Feherty		Feherty	
Hallmark	Hitch Holidays	Naughty or Nice ('12, Fantasy) Hilarie Burton, Gabriel Tigerman, Matt Dallas.				The Christmas Parade ('14, Drama)	
HBO	6:00 47 Ronin	Getting On CC	Comeback	★★ Grudge Match ('13, Comedy) Robert De Niro, Sylvester Stallone. CC			
History	Pickers	American Pickers		American Pickers		American Pickers	
HGTV	Love-List	Love It or List It		Love It or List It		Tiny	Hunt Intl
Learning	Say Yes	Couple	Couple	Say Yes	Say Yes	Borrowed	Borrowed
Lifetime	Kristin	The Santa Con ('14) Barry Watson.				Nanny-Christ	
MSNBC	Hardball	All In With Chris		Rachel Maddow		Lockup	
MTV	Girl Code	Girl Code	Girl Code	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.
NFL	NFL Total	Playbook Primetime		A Football Life		A Football Life	
Nick	Santa Hunters ('14) CC			Full H'se	Full H'se	Prince	Prince
NGEO	Lost Ark	Lost Kings, Bible		Search, Noah's Ark		Noah's Flood	
Oxygen	Raising Helen	:10 ★★ A Cinderella Story ('04) Hilary Duff, Jennifer Coolidge.				:15 ★★ A Cinderella Story ('04)	
Showtime	:00 Homeland	The Affair		Boxing Adonis Stevenson vs. Dmitry Sukhotsky. (N) (L) CC			
Spike	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops	Cops
Starz	6:15 Frozen	★★★ Muppets Most Wanted ('14, Comedy) Ricky Gervais. iTV (P). CC				9:55 The Amazing Spider-Man 2	
SyFy	Cabin-Woods	WWE Friday Night SmackDown! (N) CC				Zombie Apocalypse ('11, Horror)	
TBS	Seinfeld CC	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Deal With It (N)	Deal With It (N)	★ Rush Hour 3 ('07) Jackie Chan.	
TCM	Apartment	★★★ High Society ('56) Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly. CC (DVS)				★★★ The Glass Slipper ('55)	
TMC	★★ Four Brothers	★★★ Django Unchained ('12, Western) Jamie Foxx. An ex-slave and a German bounty hunter roam America's South. CC					
TNT	:00 Castle	Christmas 2014		Wake Up Call (N)		Christmas 2014	
Travel	Mysteries	Mysteries-Museum		Mysteries-Museum		Mysteries-Museum	
TV Land	Walker, Tex. Ranger		FamFeud	FamFeud	Raymond	King	King
USA	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family
VH1	Mob	Mob Wives CC		★★★ Batman ('89) Jack Nicholson.			
WGN-A	Funny Videos	How I Met	How I Met	How I Met	How I Met	How I Met	How I Met

Half of calories from sugar alcohols count as carbs

DEAR DOCTOR K: I have Type 2 diabetes. Many low-carb and sugar-free products contain "sugar alcohols." What are they? Do they count as carbohydrates?

DEAR READER: Type 2 diabetes is marked by elevated levels of blood glucose, or sugar. Untreated or poorly controlled diabetes can lead to serious complications including heart attacks, kidney failure, amputation and blindness.

An important part of controlling blood sugar involves making healthy food choices. People with diabetes should be particularly mindful of carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are like a chain with a number of links. When a carbohydrate with many links enters your stomach and intestine, it is broken down into multiple small pieces. The smallest piece, the single link in the chain, is primarily what is absorbed into the blood. The most important small sugar is glucose.

Table sugar is a two-link carbohydrate that is easily broken down into glucose. If you were to swallow 10 teaspoons of table sugar, it would quickly enter your bloodstream. That's not good. You want to eat carbohydrates that are broken down in the gut more slowly so that they enter the bloodstream more slowly.

We've talked about this concept before: Foods that contain carbohydrates that are rapidly broken down into glucose have a high glycemic index and high glycemic load. A steady diet of such foods is not healthy for people with diabetes – or for anyone else.

Dr. Anthony Komaroff

Carbohydrates are the major component of bread, pasta, cereals, fruit, milk, vegetables and beans. They have more of an impact on blood sugar levels than fats and proteins do.

For years, doctors advised people with diabetes to avoid table sugar or foods with lots of sugar. That's still good advice, of course. But these days, the taboo against sugar has been replaced by an emphasis on overall carbohydrate control.

What does that mean? First, limit carbs to about half of your total calories for the day. Equally important, primarily eat carbohydrates with a low glycemic load.

You asked about the many so-called sugar-free foods that contain sugar alcohols. Examples of sugar alcohols (also called polyols) include sorbitol, xylitol and mannitol. These sweeteners are often found in sugar-free chewing gum, candy, cookies and ice cream.

Polyols do contain some calories and carbohydrates. But only half of the sugar alcohol is digested and absorbed into the bloodstream. On the other hand, nearly all the table sugar in the diet enters the blood. If you count carbohydrates, as many people with diabetes do, count half the calories from sugar alcohols as carbohydrates.

Products containing sugar alcohols do have drawbacks. If eaten in large quantities, for example, they can have a laxative effect.

In summary, reach for healthy sources of carbohydrates – vegetables and fruits – over candy and soft drinks. And choose whole grains such as brown rice, wholewheat flour and rolled oats over refined carbs such as white rice, white flour, white pasta and instant oatmeal. You'll be doing your blood sugar a favor while getting a lot more nutritional bang for your buck.

Dr. Komaroff is a physician and professor at Harvard Medical School. To send questions, go to AskDoctorK.com, or write: Ask Doctor K, 10 Shattuck St., Second Floor, Boston, MA 02115.

Her heart and her gut are telling her different things

HELLO, CAROLYN: I really need another opinion on my husband. I'm 29, three kids, have been married for eight years, together 14 – since high school.

Basically I notice my husband texts with his co-worker early in the morning, midday and when he's off. He has assured me it's work-related, but my gut says it's something more. How can I approach this? He has a history of not being truthful. – Anonymous

DEAR ANONYMOUS: That's everything, isn't it? He's dishonest. So, a life with him means a heightened chance his "work" texts aren't about work. You can clear up this round of suspicions and another one will be lined up, like Pez.

That means the issue for you isn't really whether he's being honest this time or the next or the next. This issue is whether you are ready to live *your* life honestly – and by that I mean, without the illusion that seems to be guiding you right now: that you have a marriage of honesty and fidelity unless and until you get evidence otherwise.

You may have both honesty and fidelity right now, of course; I take no position on that. I'm talking about your attention to the trees (his texting this colleague) instead of the forest (his history of living by his own rules).

Living your life honestly, with this man as your husband, means accepting he is capable of having stuff on the side that he lies to you about. That means there's at least a meaningful chance at any given time that he has a flirtation or affair going, or spent money you didn't know about, or was off doing X when he said he'd be Y.

Carolyn Hax

Yes, I know, Merry Christmas. If it helps, anyone in an intimate relationship runs some degree of this same risk, because none of us can ever fully know someone's mind or even whereabouts. We all have to find a way to live with that chance of chaos without driving ourselves or our partners nuts.

But you know your risk to be higher from his past dishonesty, so step back, see the forest, then choose what comes next from your available options.

If it helps, all of your choices follow one of three general paths:

■ Stay with him and stay vigilant. This is roughly the path you're on now, so you know its downsides – not only is it joyless to be your spouse's hall monitor, but it's also ultimately futile, since a leash is out of the question.

■ Stay with him knowing that this is who he is; that you are the main person in his life, if sometimes not the only; and that you get enough of what you need from this arrangement to be a partner to it, witting and willing. This may also be where you are right now, in your more candid moments with yourself.

■ Or leave, not because you finally prove he's cheating, but because, after giving him every chance to be an honest partner, his words remain just words and words aren't enough.

Hard choices all, yes – so talk to him, talk to people you trust, talk to a counselor.

Whatever you settle on, though, it beats hosting this constant battle between what your heart wants and your gut is trying to say.

Email Carolyn at tellme@washpost.com, follow her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/carolyn.hax or chat with her online at noon Eastern time each Friday at www.washingtonpost.com.

Crossword

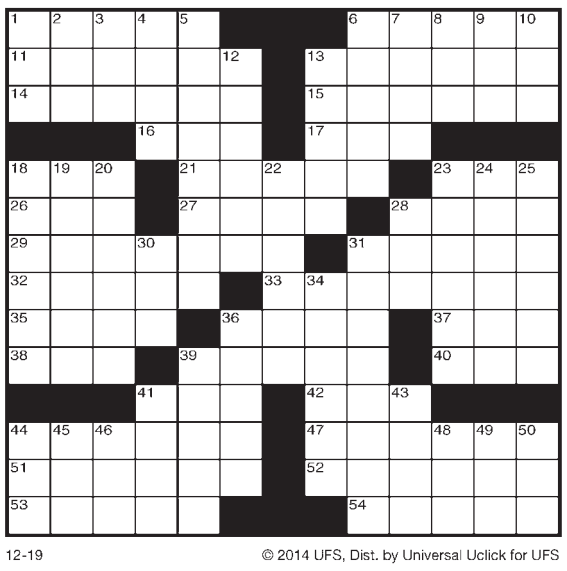
ACROSS
1 Drops leaves
6 Out of practice
11 Monotony
13 Held down a job
14 Microscopic animal
15 Playing marbles
16 Chow mein additive
17 Membership dues
18 Go out, like the tide
21 Surmise
23 Ms. Thurman
26 Visualize
27 Earl — Biggers
28 Metallic rocks
29 Lustrous material
31 Map
32 Eschew
33 Como or Crosby
35 Graceful seabird
36 Football cheers
37 Neighbor of Mex.
38 Sooner than anon
39 Foundation
40 Dirty place
41 Got a prize
42 Bridal notice word
44 Unoccupied
47 Ontario city
51 Lion families
52 Graduate, almost
53 Joined with
54 Actor Matt

DOWN
1 RR terminal
2 Finish a dress
3 Shogun's capital
4 Carpe —!
5 Dwindled
6 Walkie-talkie OK
7 Press
8 Slalom need
9 Caddie's offering
10 NFL gains
12 Fridge stick-on
13 Thin cookie
18 Elaborate residence
19 Dam builder
20 Earlier
22 Noisy disturbance
23 Planet next to Saturn
24 Least
25 Off course
28 Aha!
30 Bygone auto ornament
31 Molly-coddled
34 Jungle chargers
36 Carries on
39 Prepared fish
41 Walk in water
43 Long-active volcano
44 FDR had three
45 Onassis nickname
46 Spanish hero
48 Intention
49 Go courting
50 Prince Valiant's eldest

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	P	A		E	A	C	H		M	A	N	Y
I	O	U		A	L	P	O		E	P	E	E
T	U	T	O	R	I	A	L		A	L	A	N
S	T	O	R	M	S		D	O	N	U	T	
			C	U	T	S		P	E	S	O	
P	I	L	A	F		E	A	T	S			
U	T	A		F	I	E	F		T	A	K	E
T	A	X	I		S	P	R	Y		V	E	T
			V	O	T	E		A	L	G	A	E
	I	G	O	R		D	I	N	E			
	M	U	R	A	L		S	K	A	T	E	S
P	A	L	I		O	B	S	I	D	I	A	N
O	G	L	E		A	R	U	N		E	V	A
T	E	S	S		D	R	E	G		R	E	P

Want more puzzles?
Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com



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Jumble

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RUNPS

POATD

MESSEA

VEWTEL

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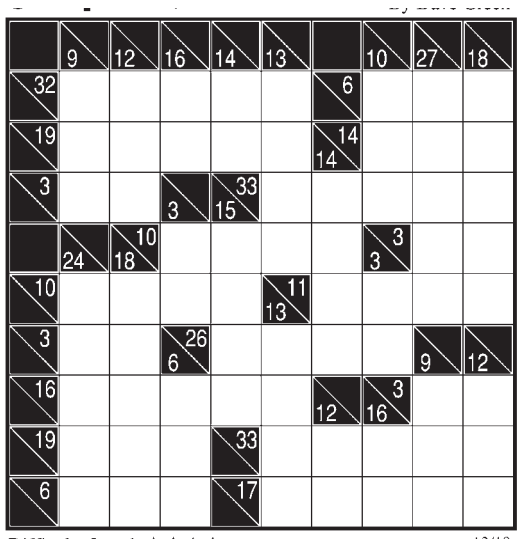
Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Ans: " " (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BLITZ GLORY ASTHMA SHRANK
Answer: The Australian marsupials' new treehouse was — HIGH "KOALA-TY"

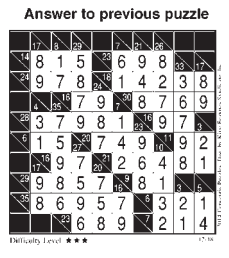
Kakuro



Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/19

How to play: Numbers above the slash are across clues; numbers below the slash are down clues. The goal is to enter digits 1-9 in the white cells to add up to the number clues. You cannot use any digit more than once when adding up to a clue.

Answer to previous puzzle



Bridge

Naomi Judd, a country singer and songwriter who had 15 No. 1 hits with her daughter, Wynonna Judd, said, "A dead-end street is a good place to turn around."

In yesterday's deal, declarer used an opponent's opening bid to help him place the missing honor cards. This can also be done by the defenders. Look at the North and East hands. South is in four spades after the given auction. West leads the heart ace. How should East plan the defense?

South's two-spade rebid guaranteed at least a six-card suit. With only five spades, he would have shown a second suit, rebid in no-trump or raised clubs. North jumped to game, of course.

At trick one, East had no desire for his partner to shift to another suit. So he encouraged with his heart eight. West cashed the heart king and played a third heart to East's queen. Now East shifted to the diamond queen. However, declarer won with his ace, drew trumps and claimed.

The diamond suit was a dead-end street. East should have counted up the high-card points. He had seven, dummy held 13 and West had already produced seven in hearts.

That left only 13 unaccounted for. Surely South had them all. And if he did, the defenders were not winning a trick in the minors.

Their only chance was to gain a trump trick. When the defenders have taken every possible side-suit trick, it cannot cost – and might gain – to concede a ruff-and-sluff.

If East had led his last heart, West could have ruffed with his spade eight. Then, after dummy overruffed with the queen, East would have been assured of a trump trick.

North 12-19-14
♠ Q 5 2
♥ J 10 6
♦ K 10
♣ A K 10 9 4

West
♠ 8
♥ A K 2
♦ 8 7 6 5 3 2
♣ 7 3 2

East
♠ J 10 9
♥ Q 8 7 3
♦ Q J 9 4
♣ J 6

South
♠ A K 7 6 4 3
♥ 9 5 4
♦ A
♣ Q 8 5

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: East-West

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass

Opening lead: ♥ A

Sudoku

Difficulty: 5 (of 5)

	4				5			
9				2	8	3		
8		5		6				
		1	4				6	
					7	1		
	3					9		
				4		2	8	
		7			2			
5		3	7					

12-19-14 ©2014 JFS/KF Dist. by Universal Uclick for UFS

How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

5	1	2	7	6	3	9	8	4
3	6	8	9	4	5	2	1	7
7	4	9	2	8	1	5	3	6
1	7	6	8	9	2	3	4	5
9	2	5	3	1	4	7	6	8
8	3	4	6	5	7	1	9	2
2	9	1	4	7	6	8	5	3
4	8	7	5	3	9	6	2	1
6	5	3	1	2	8	4	7	9

Judge orders ex-billionaire jailed for contempt

BUTTE, Mont. (AP) — A federal judge on Thursday ordered Tim Blixseth jailed after the onetime billionaire and embattled real estate mogul failed to comply with an order to pay nearly $14 million to the creditors of an ultra-luxury Montana resort.

At a hearing in Butte, U.S. District Judge Sam Haddon said the Yellowstone Club founder must be held in custody until he can come up with an accounting for the money.

Blixseth's attorney Michael Ferrigno said he was unsure how long that will take because his client has told him many of the documents are in Mexico.

Haddon last year found Blixseth in contempt of court for selling a property in Mexico in defiance of another judge's instructions.

Blixseth delayed potential court sanctions for months with an unsuccessful appeal to the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

Creditors' attorneys want him incarcerated for not abiding Haddon's order that Blixseth turn over the money from the sale or post a bond in an equal amount.

The case stems from the 2008 bankruptcy of the Yellowstone Club, a members-only ski and golf resort near Big Sky founded by Blixseth and his ex-wife, Edra.

The club emerged from bankruptcy in 2009 under new ownership. However, its creditors have spent years trying to collect on $241 million that courts have ruled Blixseth fraudulently drained from the club for his and Edra's personal use.

Tim Blixseth claims he no longer has the $13.8 million from the 2011 sale of the El Tamarindo resort, which included hotels and condominiums in the state of Jalisco. He originally paid $40 million for the property.

A federal judge earlier ordered that the property not be sold or transferred while the bankruptcy proceedings were pending.

In a declaration filed earlier this month, Blixseth told the court he received only about $9.5 million for the Mexico property after various expenses were factored in. That money was later spent or transferred, he said. Blixseth also submitted hundreds of pages of financial documents – many of them in Spanish – to back up his claims.

Haddon blasted Blixseth during an earlier proceeding for deliberately withholding information about the sale from the court.

Attorneys for the club's creditors, known as the Yellowstone Club Liquidating Trust, said Blixseth's attempt to explain where the money went amounted to an incomplete "document dump." They said he left $8.7 million still unaccounted for, and asked that Blixseth be incarcerated until he fully complies with the court's earlier order.

Group challenges timber producer's 'green' label

By JEFF BARNARD
Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. — A watchdog group is challenging the environmentally friendly "green lumber" certification for Plum Creek Timberlands, one of the nation's biggest landowners and timber producers.

The Center for Sustainable Economy, based in Lake Oswego, Oregon, filed the complaint Thursday with a nonprofit group that verifies whether timber producers follow standards for environmentally responsible logging, including replanting after harvest, protecting water and biological diversity, and complying with environmental laws and regulations.

The complaint covers Plum Creek logging in Oregon's Coast Range, citing 11 civil citations over the past six years for violating state logging regulations, including four citations for exceeding the clear-cutting limit of 120 acres. The complaint includes Google Earth images showing landslides in areas stripped of trees by Plum Creek.

"The fragmentation caused by large clear-cuts is a driver of extinction for wildlife dependent upon interior forest conditions and one of the most damaging ecological impacts associated with forest operations in Oregon," the complaint said.

The company also was cited for failing to protect riparian zones along fish-bearing streams, allowing logging road drainage into a stream and failing to notify state regulators of changes in logging operations.

Seattle-based Plum Creek said in a statement that it was aware of the complaint and reviewing it.

"Plum Creek is committed to practicing sustainable forestry where ever we operate," company spokeswoman Kathy Budinick said in an email. "There is an established process in place for handling such complaints, and we will engage fully in the process to understand and address this complaint."

On its website, the company states prominently that all its timberlands are certified by the nonprofit Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

The complaint demands that the Sustainable Forestry Initiative immediately suspend certification for Plum Creek in Oregon and investigate the company's logging practices throughout the country.

Besides giving companies a way to green up their image, certification can have economic benefits. Some state and federal agencies are required to buy products that are certified as sustainable, and some businesses and retailers have sustainability policies. The Home Depot Inc., for example, says on its website that it sells only lumber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, the other major certification body.

The timber industry started the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, but it has since become an independent nonprofit certifying more than 240 million acres of private forests. Outside auditors certify that companies conform to standards for environmentally responsible logging.

Chris Lunde, harvest manager for Blakely Tree Farms LP in Seattle, oversees compliance with Sustainable Forestry Initiative standards in Oregon. He confirmed receiving the complaint, the first in his seven years in the position.

Plum Creek has 45 days to respond, and the complaint will be taken up by an outside auditor, initiative spokeswoman Elizabeth Woodworth said.

John Talberth, president of Center for Sustainable Economy, said the group believes the Oregon violations are part of a larger nationwide problem.

EU leaders agree to fund for jumpstarting growth

By JOHN-THOR DAHLBURG
Associated Press

BRUSSELS — European Union leaders agreed Thursday to create a strategic investment fund that could generate up to 315 billion euros ($386 billion) in private- and public-sector money to upgrade infrastructure, jumpstart the EU's sluggish economies and ignite job growth.

"The economic situation has improved ... but we are not safe yet," said EU President Donald Tusk. "Today, we need more investment, more structural reforms and sound public finances across Europe."

The plan approved by leaders of the 28-nation EU at their one-day summit meeting in Brussels calls for the new European Fund for Strategic Investments to be in operation and approving new investment projects by mid-2015.

The plan, which calls for use of EU seed money to leverage up to 15 times more in private funds, is the brainchild of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. Critics have already warned that despite its multibillion euro price tag, it may not be big enough to win over wary investors.

"This package looks like creative accounting for the moment," Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite said as she arrived for the summit.

Yves Logghe / AP

British Prime Minister David Cameron, second left, walks towards a meeting room during an EU summit at the European Council building in Brussels, Thursday. Europea n Union leaders meet with the top agenda item an ambitious plan to use EU seed money and loan guarantees to jumpstart investment and revive the EU's growth and job creation rates.

Grybauskaite and the other EU leaders seemed to acknowledge the possibility that private companies may be reluctant to risk their capital by noting in a summit communique that the strategic fund will accept contributions from EU member states. For the fund to launch, it would also require approval by European legislators.

European Parliament President Martin Schulz, in a speech prepared for delivery at the summit, said the EU must stimulate and modernize its economy, or risk falling farther behind global competitors like the U.S. and China.

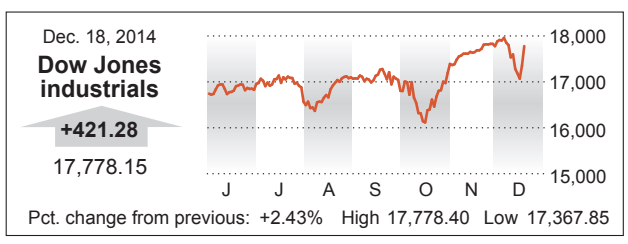
Schulz said investment in areas like schools, universities, green energy and infrastructure was key "if we want Europe to be an economic champion in the future."

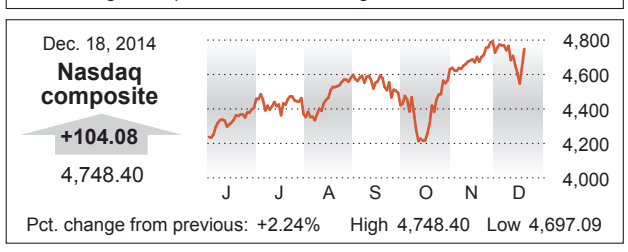
German Chancellor Angela Merkel said investments fostered by the strategic fund "must go into projects for the future – particularly, for example, in the digital economy or where we aren't so good on the world market as we should be: electromobility (electric cars) and the like."

Over dinner, the leaders discussed what Tusk termed the other major challenge for Europe: what long-term policy to adopt toward Russia.

"We must go beyond being reactive and defensive," Tusk, a former Polish prime minister, said. He called for a strategy that is "tough and responsible" for dealing with Russia and its president, Vladimir Putin, and resolving the Ukraine crisis.

MARKETS





Amer Elec Power AEP
$59.98 ▲ +1.16 +2.0%
+4.8 +28.3

Whirlpool WHR
$190.52 ▲ +1.59 +.8%
+4.6 +21.5

LocalStocks

NAME	TICKER	52-WK RANGE LO	HI	CLOSE	CHG	%CHG	WK	MO	QTR
AT&T Inc	T	31.74	37.48	33.51	+.84	+2.6	▲	▼	▼
AEP	AEP	45.24	59.84	59.98	+1.16	+2.0	▲	▲	▲
Apple Inc s	AAPL	70.51	119.75	112.65	+3.24	+3.0	▲	▼	▲
AutoZone	AZO	461.14	612.83	615.48	+13.02	+2.2	▲	▲	▲
BP PLC	BP	34.88	53.48	38.32	+.63	+1.7	▲	▼	▼
BonTon	BONT	6.59	18.62	7.20	+.08	+1.1	▼	▼	▼
CMS Eng	CMS	25.95	34.15	34.55	+.62	+1.8	▲	▲	▲
ChemFinl	CHFC	25.99	33.28	29.91	+.19	+0.6	▲	▲	▲
CocaCola	KO	36.89	45.00	42.39	+.84	+2.0	▲	▼	▼
Comcast	CMCSA	47.74	57.49	56.29	+.96	+1.7	▲	▲	▲
Deere	DE	78.88	94.89	89.54	+.80	+0.9	▲	▲	▲
Disney	DIS	69.84	94.50	92.61	+1.23	+1.3	▲	▲	▲
ExxonMbl	XOM	86.19	104.76	91.16	+2.14	+2.4	▲	▼	▼
FamilyDlr	FDO	55.64	80.97	79.46	+.21	+0.3	▲	▲	▲
FifthThird	FITB	17.65	23.90	20.09	+.49	+2.5	▲	▼	▲
1stSource	SRCE	27.56	33.21	32.97	+.80	+2.5	▲	▲	▲
FordM	F	13.26	18.12	14.81	+.36	+2.5	▼	▼	▲
GenElec	GE	23.69	28.09	25.14	+.71	+2.9	▲	▼	▼
Google A	GOOGL	497.19	615.03	514.62	+8.17	+1.6	▼	▼	▼
HomeDp	HD	73.96	101.40	100.67	+1.73	+1.7	▲	▲	▲
HorizBcp	HBNC	19.38	26.71	26.00	+.34	+1.3	▲	▲	▲
HuntBncsh	HBAN	8.66	10.50	10.47	+.28	+2.7	▲	▲	▲
IDEX	IEX	65.91	81.82	76.23	+1.78	+2.4	▲	▼	▲
IntegrysE	TEG	52.08	76.47	76.68	+1.00	+1.3	▲	▲	▲
IBM	IBM	150.50	199.21	157.68	+5.75	+3.8	▲	▼	▼
JPMorgCh	JPM	52.97	63.16	61.48	+1.71	+2.9	▲	▲	▲
JohnJn	JNJ	86.09	109.49	106.81	+2.74	+2.6	▲	▼	▲
JournalCm	JRN	7.79	11.37	11.16	+.15	+1.4	▲	▲	▲
Lowes	LOW	44.13	67.27	66.62	+.67	+1.0	▲	▲	▲
McDnlds	MCD	87.62	103.78	93.67	+2.02	+2.2	▲	▼	▼
Microsoft	MSFT	34.63	50.05	47.52	+1.78	+3.9	▲	▼	▲
MillerHer	MLHR	26.25	32.72	29.95	-1.15	-3.7	▲	▼	▲
Penney	JCP	4.90	11.30	6.80	+.17	+2.6	▲	▼	▼
Perrigo	PRGO	125.37	168.39	164.85	+5.70	+3.6	▲	▲	▲
Pfizer	PFE	27.51	33.12	31.97	+.85	+2.7	▲	▲	▲
ProctGam	PG	75.26	91.28	92.00	+1.30	+1.4	▲	▲	▲
RepubSvc	RSG	31.42	39.97	40.46	+1.15	+2.9	▲	▲	▲
SearsHldgs	SHLD	24.10	48.25	33.29	+1.27	+4.0	▲	▼	▲
Steelcse	SCS	13.60	18.22	17.73	+.11	+0.6	▲	▲	▲
Stryker	SYK	71.24	95.37	95.83	+3.00	+3.2	▲	▲	▲
Target	TGT	54.66	74.76	74.64	+1.07	+1.5	▲	▲	▲
TractSupp	TSCO	55.95	79.14	77.50	+.60	+0.8	▼	▲	▲
UPS B	UPS	93.19	111.57	110.93	+2.38	+2.2	▲	▲	▲
VerizonCm	VZ	45.09	53.66	47.05	+.61	+1.3	▲	▼	▼
WalMart	WMT	72.27	88.09	85.94	+1.71	+2.0	▲	▲	▲
Walgrn	WAG	54.86	76.39	74.38	+2.39	+3.3	▼	▲	▲
Wendys Co	WEN	7.61	10.27	8.81	+.18	+2.1	▲	▲	▲
Whrlpl	WHR	124.39	190.22	190.52	+1.59	+0.8	▲	▲	▲
Worthgtn	WOR	33.60	48.58	31.36	-4.03	-11.4	▼	▼	▼
XPO Logis	XPO	22.84	40.65	40.51	+1.03	+2.6	▲	▲	▲

LOCAL GRAIN

Co-Alliance LLP Buchanan
Corn .....$3.66, up 3¢
January corn.....$3.66, up 3¢
Beans .....$9.85, up 8¢
January beans .....$9.85, up 8¢
These are the markets as of yesterday.

Hot Off the Press!

FREE Classified Ads for items under $500!

NEWSPAPER SERVICES

FREE CLASSIFIED AD

Multiple items accepted totaling $500 or less – Price must be included in the ad.
Limited to 5 lines

Newspaper where you would like your ad to appear:_____

City where items are located:_____

Name:_____ Phone:_____

Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Print Ad here:_____

_____

_____

*Newspaper Services reserves the right to edit or deny any ad without notification. Ads will be processed on a first come, first-served basis and will begin as soon as processing is complete.

Guidelines...

- Ad will run 1 week with a 5-line limit
- No changes are permitted
- Individuals/Private Parties only. No Businesses (ie: No Rentals, Firms, or Services)
- Ads for tickets, rummage sales, animals for sale, personals, produce, plants, hay, firewood, and handcrafted items are excluded
- Free items or pets must have "Free" included
- Price must be included in the ad and must be less than $500
- Multiple items accepted but must total $500 or less
- Limit 1 ad per household per calendar month
- Must have an active subscription to a Newspaper Services publication
- Ads over 5 lines will be charged at our regular rate
- Ads must be received by Email, Mail, Fax or In-Person. NO PHONE CALLS.

Email to: classifieds@newspaperservices.biz
Fax to: 269-429-8344
Mail to: 3450 Hollywood Rd, St. Joseph, MI 49085

The Herald-Palladium CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Desk: 1-800-356-4262
Hours: Monday - Friday 7am-5pm
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1, 2 and 3 bedrooms
Ask about our free
rent specials
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pmandmindiana.com

LA PORTE:
1 bedroom
lower, new paint,
very clean,
hardwood floors,
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refrigerator,
No Pets, No
Smoking $590
monthly. That
includes everything!
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LA PORTE:
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$560 deposit.
No Pets.
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APARTMENT
Currently available
2 bedrooms
1105 W. 10th St.
Call 219-362-4473
Roselawnapts.com

Laporte: 5 room upstairs, $400 water included. 219-362-7160

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Large 1 Bedroom upper at 204 Thurman Ave., excellent neighborhood. All utilities included, with A/C, off street parking. $580 a month, $500 Security Deposit. Call 219-577-5444

Mi. City, IN. 4bdrm Historic, hardwood floors. new furnace, water sewage and sanitation included $840

1bedroom, Historic Apartment, Hard wood floors, pocket doors, newer appliances, heat, water, Sanitation & sewer included. $610/mo. 2, One car Garage bays, $120 each 219-916-4578 or 219-787-8066

Michigan City
1 bedroom upper & lower apt, range & refrigerator, carpet & ceramic floor, deck, off street parking, security light, includes water & sanitation, tenant pays gas & elect, neat & clean, security deposit, NO PETS/NO SMOKING call 219-872-7031 leave message

Michigan City
1 Bedroom Upper.
Some utilities
included.
$425.00 monthly.
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Michigan City
Cedar Gate
Apartments
110 Cedar Gate Ct.
Holiday Special!
First Month
Free Rent!
Studio, 1 and
2 Bedrooms.
Single Story with
attic. Washer/
Dryer hookup
in most units.
Pet Friendly
219-809-6080

Michigan City
Deluxe 3 bdrm upper
custom kitchen,
ceramic tile,
hardwood flooring,
washer dryer hookup
324 1/2 E. 10th
$720 month + utils
No pets

Deluxe 3 bdrm
house. Newly
remodeled,
hardwood floors
W/D hookup
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$800 monthly
plus utilities
no pets
Call 219-229-0270

Michigan City, Queen's Park Apts Small quiet setting. Spacious 1&2 bdrm from $575/mo! 219-296-9606

Michigan City: Cute & Cozy 1 bed off street parking, stove & refrig, 219-362-5933 or 219-851-1931

Michigan City
Call About Move-in
Special. 3 bedroom,
You pay utilities.
$595/mo +deposit.
411 1/2 Chicago St
Call 219-617-5667

Michigan City;
Great location! Clean, main floor two bedroom apartment. Heat and water included. $575 plus deposit. Call (219)861-3622

St. Joseph 1022 Park St. 2 bedroom, Lower. Big living room, ceiling fans, A/C, Mini blinds, W/D. $600 No pets call 269-429-0040

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Completely
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Starting as low as
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& security deposit.

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Michigan City: 216 Main St Apt. 3bdrm, full bath, new carpeting, new kitchen flooring & tons of cabinet space, built in microwave, stove & refrig included, brand new 96% eff heating & a/c, water/hot water included, 1 car garage & off street parking included, lg back desk $750 312-961-5679

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DUPLEXES
and APARTMENTS
available for rent
or land contract.
For available
properties &
application
information
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or visit our website
Kkrental.webs.com

Michigan City.
STOP 3, ONE BLOCK OFF LAKE SHORE DR. Hilltop lake view. 2bd. new stove, all new carpeting, recently remodeled. 20x15 21 window MASTER BEDROOM with views overlooking Lake Michigan. Front porch. Walkout basement with large family room. 700/mo+deposit. Call Rod 574-288-5837 or 574-210-9088 (cell phone)

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2 Bedroom house in
Coloma $580/mo
plus deposit.
No Pets.
269-468-4440

Michigan City
Gardena Street- 3 bed 1.5 bath, full basement, hardwood, large kitchen, 2 car garage. 219-728-4779

Michigan City
Lease a 2 bedroom,
1 bath home
Starting at
$550 per month
Only a few left!
Call 219-874-4290

New Buffalo: 2bd/2bath 1 car garage near downtown. call 219-670-0000

St. Joe 1248 E. Johnbeers. 3br, 1ba 1100/mo. SW Realty 269-429-3211.

DUPLEXES FOR RENT

St. Joe 5658 Tilly, 2 bedroom, $750/mo Southwest Realty 429-3211

WANTED TO RENT

South Haven; Mature,single,professional looking for unfurnished 2 bedroom 1-plus bath home/condo to rent within walking distance of downtown South Haven. 1 small, house trained dog. Minimum 1 year lease. Available Feb,Mar, Apr 2015. Please call 616-405-2550 and leave a message and leave message which also includes address of rental.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOMES FOR SALE

Michigan City
Buying a home
made easy!
3 bedroom
2 bath home
starting as low as
$10,000.00
Great Location/
Community
Amenities Included
Call (219) 874-4290

Cutler Real Estate Auction: Saturday, Jan. 10, 2015 starting at 3:00 P.M. C.S.T. 327 Cloud St. (just off E. Barker Ave.) Michigan City, IN 46360. Home has 2 bedrooms, front room, kitchen, sun porch, attic, basement, 1 bathroom, large outside barn-shed, huge fenced in yard both front and back, all appliances, has a newer roof that was put on in the last 3-4 years; Updated furnace, pipes, and a newer water heater. This home truly needs an upgraded electrical panel and is ready to move right in - flip it - or rent this baby out! The property is offered "as is" condition. Possession of the home shall be at closing. Terms: $1000 down day of auction, balance due within 30 days or sooner. The taxes will be prorated to day of closing. To view this surprisingly nice property call Mike Moldenhauer at 219-229-0411 or Lisa King at Countywide Realty at 219-608-1950. Owner: Tom (deceased) & Norma Cutler.

MOBILE HOMES FOR SALE

Westville IN
2 homes for sale
Handyman special
$1200
2 bedroom 1 bath all
appliances included
Please call or text
219-229-4932

LEGALS

LEGALS

NOTICE TO
CREDITORS

The Settlor, John A. Mack, who lived at 561 Upton Drive, St. Joseph, MI 49085, died on October 18, 2014. No Probate Estate has been opened for John A. Mack, and there is no personal representative of the Settlor's Probate Estate to whom Letters of Authority have been issued. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the John A. Mack and Stephanie A. Mack Joint Revocable Living Trust dated September 1, 2006, as amended, will be forever barred unless presented to Stephanie A. Mack, Trustee, within four months after the date of this publication.
Notice is further given that the Trust will thereafter be assigned and distributed to the persons entitled to it.

December 15, 2014

Stephanie A. Mack
561 Upton Drive
St. Joseph, MI 49085

ASHLEY STEPHENS
P78873
Passaro, Kahne &
Taylor Law Offices,
P.L.L.C.
685 West Main Street
Benton Harbor, MI
49022
(269) 983-0325

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF BERRIEN

NOTICE TO
CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

FILE NO:
2014-0599-DE-N

Estate of: Leatha
Mashke
Date of Birth: November 30, 1914

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Leatha Mashke, who lived at 1401 N. Manor St., St. Joseph, MI 49085, died December 18, 2013.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Stephen Ross, named personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085 and the named personal representative within four months after the date of this publication of this notice.

12/18/2014

Stephen Ross
2690 Paddock Circle
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 429-7402

Passaro & Kahne Law
Office, P.L.L.C.
Howard H. Kahne
P32737
685 West Main Street
Benton Harbor, MI
49022
(269) 983-0325

NOTICE
REQUEST FOR
PROPOSAL
CITY ATTORNEY
SERVICES
The City of New Buffalo, Mchigan is accepting proposals for City Attorney services until January 5, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. To receive bid information, contact New Buffalo City Hall at (269) 469-1500.
Allyson Holm, City Clerk

Lake Michigan College, Benton Harbor MI, is soliciting proposals for Mainstage Ticketing System RFP until 5 PM, EST, 01/14/15. Contact Nathan Main at 269-927-8169 or nmain@lakemichigan college.edu for info.

PUBLIC NOTICE
REQUEST FOR BIDS
Keeler Township will receive sealed bids for the demolition and removal of the remaining foundation, rubbish, debris, all tree stumps, and other unsafe conditions from the property at 64151 Territorial Rd. W., Hartford, MI 49057 which is one lot West of the Keeler Township Fire Department. The site will be filled and brought back to grade. Keeler Township owns this lot and will receive sealed bids until Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. Keeler Township reserves the right to accept or reject the bid in the best interest of Keeler Township. Please submit proof of insurance along with your bid. Send to Keeler Township, Carl F. Davis, Clerk, 64418 Territorial Rd. W., Hartford, MI 49057. For further information contact 269-621-6481.

Public Notice
Watervliet Charter
Township

The Watervliet Charter Township Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed Parks and Recreation Plan for 2015-2019 on January 19th at 7:00 PM at the Township Hall, 4959 M-140, Watervliet, MI, 49098. If you would like to submit comments via email please send them to Patt Bambrick <pbambrick@comcast.net>, mail comments to the Township Hall or submit in person to the Township Hall by January 19, 2015 at 9:00 AM. The draft plan is available for inspection at the Township Hall and Watervliet Public Library during regular business hours for the next 30 days. All persons will have the opportunity to be heard at the hearing. Reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired, or other aids and services for individuals with disabilities are available by contacting the Township Clerk at least five days before the meeting.

Patricia Bambrick
Township Clerk

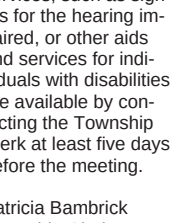
ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPECIAL NOTICE

LA PORTE:
Fish Fry,
Polish Falcons
216 E.
Lincolnway, LP
Serving 4:30 to 8:00
Carry out available
219-326-9757
Special: Sliced
Roast Beef
with Kluski
Noodles
Soup:Cream
of Onion
We are smoke free!

HAPPY ADS

Look who's 60! and still looks Young as ever! Happy Birthday! **Marc Carlson**



Love you!
Stephanie
Mom & Dad
& all the rest
of your family

CARD OF THANKS

Thank you to my angels who rescued me from a nearly fatal error in judgement at Silver Beach on Sunday morning, December 14th. It took five of you to pull my dog and me out of Lake Michigan after I slid off the western edge of the southern pier into the lake.

I especially want to thank the two young men fishing nearest to the concrete lookout who heard my frantic screams for help. I would never have made it to the red ladder on my own, and no others were near enough to hear me. Your actions summoned three more fishermen to aide in my rescue.

Thank you to the man who produced the thick black strap that was secured around my right wrist to help pull me out. Never before have bruises brought me such relief.

Thank you to the man with the silver hair who spoke kindly to me and lent me his navy blue fleece, insisting that I keep it.

Thank you to another who wrapped me in his thick camoflage coat. I didn't know which fisherman you were, but I hope you found your coat on the pier with the other men.

Thank you to a few others who tried to catch my dog who ran towards the beach after his rescue. My family found him a few hours later, leash still attached.

Thank you to the St. Joseph policemen who responded to the call and drove me home, all the while watching for my dog.

After what was probably only a 5 minute struggle alone, I was exhausted from fighting the waves while my dog made repeated attempts to secure safety on my head and shoulders. As the fight in me grew weaker, I didn't think I would survive. I can hardly summon the words to describe the relief I felt when my first two angels appeared and grabbed my wrists. But three more came and together all five of you fought for my life. I know none of your names but wanted to somehow thank you all for fighting for me.

Eternally Grateful,
Jennifer

IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory
Kevin McAlpine
March 5, 1971
December 19, 1988
and
Stephanie Turner
February 25, 1989
July 26, 2013

Sadly Missed
Always Loved
Your Family

FOUND

Found Female Caloico cat, Near paw-paw lake golf course, In watervliet. Call to identify 269-463-4378

Hagar Township: Small dresser w/ clothes on Pier Rd. Call 269-849-3514 leave a message.

EMPLOYMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE

St Joe
I am looking for an energetic and diligent person who can keep records of calls/emails from clients and customers, communicate effectively, document related issues. This is a flexible position student and others can apply send resume to douglasollard@gmail.com.

EDUCATION/ TEACHING

ST. Joe, MI. Advance your Career! Become a Dialysis Tech within 12 weeks! Classes begin in Decmber; 2 days per week, 5pm-9pm. Dialysis Techs work in: 1.Dialysis Centers 2. Medical Clinics 3. Hospitals. Earning up to 30k per year, Its a fast pace and great Career Change. Earn top pay! For information call 269-588-3106. SEATS ARE LIMITED!!

MSU Extension has one Program Associate position located in St. Joseph, MI. Primary responsibility, to teach nutrition and physical activity to low-income adult, senior and youth groups. High school or GED equivalent required with Associate's desired. Minimum of one-year experience in nutrition or related field, knowledge of basic computer programs. Must have transportation. Apply online at http://www.jobs.msu.edu, position #9852, until 1/6/15. MSU is an affirmative-action equal-opportunity employer

PAYROLL COORDINATOR
Responsible for the accurate processing and accounting for payroll and payroll related items. Associate's degree and three years of office experience required. For a complete job description and online application, please visit our website at www.lakemichigancollege.edu/hr. Questions? Contact our Human Resources Department at (269) 927-8132.

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MEDICAL/DENTAL

Berrien Springs
Job Opportunity at
Frontier Dental
Studio Looking to
hire Dental
Technician for
scanning and
designing for CAD.
Beginner can be
trained. We are
located in Berrien
Springs, MI.
To apply, call or fax
resume to
877-471-3065.

Full-time/Part-time CNS's, LPN's, RN's needed for all shift. Please apply in person M-F 8:30am to 5:00pm. Orchard Grove Extended Care, 1385 E. Empire Ave, Benton Harbor MI 49022. 269-925-0033. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer

TECHNICAL

Benton Harbor: Belle Tire seeking ASE and State Certified Mechanics. Opportunity to earn $75,000 a year or more! Apply online at www.belletirecareers.com

GENERAL HELP

The Herald-Palladium

Independent Contractor
Bundle Hauler position now available:
Must have reliable transportation capable of hauling newspaper bundles from The Herald Palladium to Home Delivery drop locations, stores & newspaper racks in the Coloma, Riverside & Watervliet areas. Applicants must have a valid driver's license & proof of car insurance.
Please contact Julie Simpleman
Send Resume to: The Herald-Palladium
P.O. Box 128 St. Joseph, MI 49085 or
Email: jsimpleman @thehp.com or 269-429-2400 ext. 161

Currently Hiring Maintenance Assistant $12 - $14/hr , Material Handler $10-12/hr Folder Operator $10-$16/hr Stitcher Operator $12 – 15/hr. Must apply in person Batson Printing 195 Michigan Benton Harbor Mi 49022.

Director of Music-Job Overview

The First Presbyterian Church of Decatur is looking for a Director of Music. This is a part-time position and will include serving as organist for Sunday Worship, Choir Director for both Senior Choir and possibly a Junior Choir and also special music functions thoughtout the year. This is a salaried position. Please email resume & references to pcdecaturmi@hotmail.com

Eau Claire
IMMEDIATE INTERVIEWS - CSM Services is currently seeking a motivated individual for cleaning at the Eau Claire Schools . Interested applicants are encouraged to apply online at http://www.csmservices.net or call our office at 1-800-490-5754

MI. City, Production Manager! Hands-on Operation Manager for a plastics packaging plant. Chemical, Filling, Training, Scheduling and Purchasing Experience. Mon-Fri. Health, Flex, IRA, Holidays and Vacation. OnLine Packaging 124 TriQuad Dr. Michigan City, IN 46360. 219-872-0925

The Herald-Palladium

Page designer wanted. We are looking for designers to lay out news pages in The Herald-Palladium and 10 other daily newspapers in our group. The ideal candidate will be proficient in InDesign, have experience in section front and newspage design and will be able to turn out a lot of pages on deadline. Send resume, cover letter and page samples to: Dave Brown, Managing Editor, The Herald-Palladium, by email (preferred) to: newsroomjobs@TheHP.com. Please put "page designer" in the subject line; or by mail at P.O. Box 128, 3450 Hollywood Road, St. Joseph, MI 49085.

Mi. City, Immediate openings in MI. CIty area. Part time, Security Guards needed. Armed and Unarmed. Must have a valid carry Permit, and own fire arm. Starting pay between $8.75 and $9.20 an hr must be available some weekends. please contact Matt and LEAVE A MESSAGE 574-514-7679.

St. Joe, MI. Auto body technician and painters helper wanted. Experienced only need apply. St.Joe Auto Body. 269-983-1414

River Valley School District Sub Bus Drivers Needed Employment info at: www.rivervalleyschools.org

SKILLED TRADE

Michigan City
Dana's Auto Body
has an immediate
job opening for an
Auto Body
Technician
with at least
2 years experience.
Must have
some tools.
Please email us at
danasautobody
@yahoo.com
or call us at
219-840-8489

Residential Maintenance Technician
The Arbor Glen Apartment Homes in Michigan City has an immediate opening for an organized technician with proven resident service skills. CFC Certification preferred with 2 years multi-family experience a plus. Benefits, retirement plan, paid time off, great work environment. Forward resume to: slamm @igcre.com or apply in person at 221 Barker Road, Michigan City, IN

TRUCKING

Benton Harbor based Trucking Company looking for Local CDL-A Drivers. Must live in Benton Harbor area, Home Daily, must have 2 yrs. experience. Call Mike 231-736-2580.

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Stevens Transport
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NEEDED
New Drivers can
Earn $900 per week!
and benefits
Carrier covers cost!
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based locally!
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Regional Routes
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Benton Harbor & St Joe area. I am seeking to provide quality care for someone that may need extra assistance to continue living in the comfort of their home. I provide companionship, transportation to appointments, shopping, fun outings, light cleaning, cooking, laundry, help with paying, bathing & much more. Resume upon request. Please call Susan at 470-7779.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

LA PORTE:
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3 way liquor
license for use in
the City of La Porte.
Beer-wine-liquor
with carryout
package. No
annual minimum
food sales
requirement.
Call 219-362-4682

ELDERLY CARE

Laporte: Part time care giver for elderly person. Call 219-324-4472. Please leave a message.

FINANCIAL

GARAGE /ESTATE SALES

GARAGE/ESTATE SALES

Going out of business. Discounts up to 80% Shannon Antique 2525 N Niles Ave. Just south of Napier ave. Thur, Fri & Sat 10a-5p Antique & contampary furniture, Steiff Bears, books, glass, porcelain, xmas decor, quality women clothing & shoes (small sizes), housewares, fabric and a lot more. Closed the week of Xmas & New Years.

Laporte: 5332 W 300 N. Wooden boat motor & trailer, Simplicity Mower, John Deer 214, Oak Sideboard, Oak Bookcase, Oak Corner Cabinet, Pine Corner Cabinet, Bakers Rack, Round Rattan table w/4 chairs, Oak Burls. Fri & Sat 9a-3p call for more detail 219-877-7738

Saint Joseph
Estate Sale!!!!
2416 Langley Ave
Friday 11am to 8pm
Saturday & Sunday
9am to 4pm
2 month old
White Whirlpool
side by side
refrigerator, beds,
knick knacks,
housewares lot of
misc!!! Call with
any questions
269-983-7843

MERCHANDISE

AUCTION SALES

Cutler Real Estate Auction: Saturday, Jan. 10, 2015 starting at 3:00 P.M. C.S.T. 327 Cloud St. (just off E. Barker Ave.) Michigan City, IN 46360. Home has 2 bedrooms, front room, kitchen, sun porch, attic, basement, 1 bathroom, large outside barn-shed, huge fenced in yard both front and back, all appliances, has a newer roof that was put on in the last 3-4 years; Updated furnace, pipes, and a newer water heater. This home truly needs an upgraded electrical panel and is ready to move right in - flip it - or rent this baby out! The property is offered "as is" condition. Possession of the home shall be at closing. Terms: $1000 down day of auction, balance due within 30 days or sooner. The taxes will be prorated to day of closing. To view this surprisingly nice property call Mike Moldenhauer at 219-229-0411 or Lisa King at Countywide Realty at 219-608-1950. Owner: Tom (deceased) & Norma Cutler.

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE

A PIANO
FOR CHRISTMAS?
Wurlitzer
Console Piano,
Light Oak. $599 or
Best Offer.
219-210-3834

Stevensville, Concert Guitar for sale, includes case and strap, Excellent Condition, $120, 269-408-0221

SPORTING GOODS

Beat The Crowds & Cold with Lefty's red, black and blue, Gobble Skwak Golf Palooza Xmas Sale! 20% off on Lefty Pro Gift Certificates. Try the family plan. Three full sets with bags for $99. Lost a club, broke a club, hate a club? Lefty has all things golf! Putters, wedges, irons, woods, hybrids, drivers, carts, bags, shoes $2-$99. Call Lefty for a gift. Consultation appointment 219-873-0858

LA PORTE:
Free Cardio
Fit Plus, (New) A
great Christmas gift
Call 219-362-3645

SPORTING GOODS

St Joe- AMMO .22 MAG. $15 box 50. 5.56 62 GR GREENTIP $50 box 150. 269-519-8367

St. Joseph
Sig P238 380 auto SS model HD, 2 6 round mags, 3 7 round mags, night sights $425 call Mick 269-519-3370

FURNITURE

Michigan City
For sale: wooden round pedestal table with glass top, twin bed with complete wood frame, brand new mattress & box-spring and Ethan Allen dresser with bookcase 219-898-7869

FIREWOOD

Berrien Springs: seasoned firewood, mixed hardwoods $185/full cord. Pick-up, Delivery also available. 269-362-0253

WANTED TO RENT/ BUY/TRADE

WANTED Dead or Alive! Heathkits & old Electronics. Electronic test equipment, Vacuum Tubes, Stereo Amplifiers, Speakers, Manuals and Parts. Working or Broken. I repair stereo amplifiers and other audio equipment. And need older parts and/or testers even if they don't work. Call 269-217-6692

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Christmas Trees
Blue Spruce
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Any size
You cut $25.
Boughs $4
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South Haven,
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Cut your tree,
then come next
door and have
a glass of wine!!
Cogdal Vineyard
269-637-2229

MISC. ITEMS FOR SALE

Bridgman 150 Avon Vehicles w/labels. Some have boxes. Mint condition $450 269-465-6716

Free Sunquest tanning bed 24 lamps, used in home. Great condition. 269-465-5799

For sale juke boxes, dart boards, pool tables, and games. Call 219-778-2422 or 219-575-2155

Sodus MI, Ping Pong Table w/accessories $30, 3 Gal air compressor $75, 8' Step ladder $45, 10' adjustable ladder $65, Breadbox bread machine $25, lots of xmas decormake offer. Punch fountain $10, 10inch radial arm saw $200, Vintage Slingerland marching drum with strap & sticks $150 obo, old 8mm cameras projector screen-best offer, 269-925-1803

MISC. ITEMS FOR SALE

Stevensville, Display cases/desks /file cabinets/Steel shelving/security system/copier Much more 1134 W. John Beers Rd/ 269-429-8522

PETS

CATS/DOGS/PETS

Dog Trainer
Will make house calls
1-269-612-2004.

FARM

FARM MARKET

Hartfort MI
Pure Michigan
Maple Syrup for sale
$10 per pint.
2 for $17
Great Christmas
Gift. Adams Farm
69676 CR 376
Hartford MI 49057
269-214-0873

Texas Ruby Red Grapefruit 5lbs/$2.50 & 18lbs/$9. **Sweet Texas Oranges** 5lbs/$3.50 & 18lbs/$12. #1 Honey Crisp Apples $0.99/lb, $20/half bushel. #2 Honey Crisp Apples .75/lb, $10/half bushel. Other varieties $7 and up. Walla Walla Sweet jumbo unions $0.35/lb, $16.50/50lbs. Red, white, and Russet potatoes $9 for 50lbs and 10lbs/$2. Sweet potatoes $0.39/lb, $10/half bushel. Corn $3.50/half bushel. Honey 3lbs/$11. Hunky Fruit Stand 2054 M140 Benton Harbor Hours Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 12pm-5pm 269-944-3025

FARM MARKET

TRANSPORTATION

CAMPERS/ TRAILERS

Michigan City: Gently used pop-up Coleman camper. New tires, kitchenette, large sleeping area, LP gas bottle included, $1,399 Call 219-221-0989

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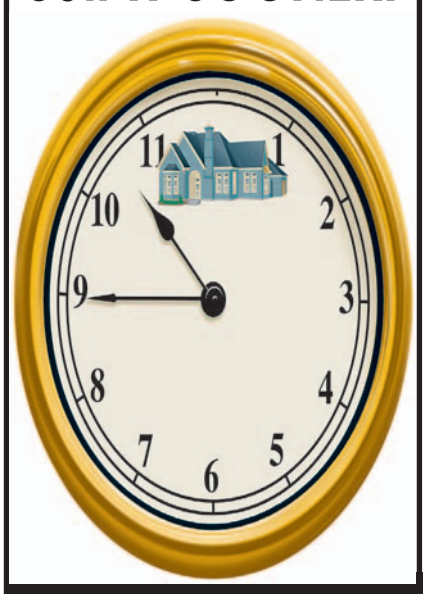

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All candidates must pass a DOT physical and drug screen.
EOE, M/F/D/V

Linde

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HOROSCOPE

By EUGENIA LAST

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

It is up to you to decide how to spend your time this year. Pleasing others is a good thing, but neglecting your own needs will cause resentment and frustration. Choose a path that will help you balance responsibilities and aspirations.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) You will be impatient, but that doesn't mean you should gossip or make someone look bad. Bide your time and wait for the outcome to unfold naturally.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Making solid investments before the end of the year will help increase your finances. Do your best to show someone how much you care. The results will be fulfilling.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) Positive results are imminent if you keep your promises. Think before you speak, or you may inadvertently cause embarrassment to someone who looks up to you.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) Despite your hard work, your plans and projects will fall short. Someone will try to take advantage of your good nature and desire to please. Look out for No. 1.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) It will be difficult to get your ideas off the ground by yourself. Talk to people who understand your plans and can give you suggestions and help along the way. Utilize your skills.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) If you are seeking inspiration, study different cultures, countries or subjects that interest you. There are many ways to expand your knowledge and stimulate your mind.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Someone will try to discredit you. Make sure you accurately present yourself and what you have to offer. Take credit for your contributions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Romance will brighten your day. Plan to do something special with a loved one. Personal adjustments made now will enable you to take on a number of new challenges in the coming year.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) There are tremendous personal changes happening. Whatever has been holding you back will be rectified, allowing you to move forward. It's time to try something new and exciting.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) No matter what you do, you will not be able to please everyone. In the end, you need to do what you feel is right. Don't feel obliged to answer for your choices. Romance is on the rise.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) You can expand your social and professional connections if you participate in an organization that you believe in. This will bring you additional allies who will fit into your plans. Share your ideas.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Someone you care about won't appreciate the extra hours you put in at work, but the financial results will be well worth it. Make plans to compensate for your lack of down time.

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